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PAST & PRESENT

No.26

JULY 1990

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Our cover shows a musician of the re-created Royal Welch Fusiliers in America — see p.39.

Published monthly by  
WINDROW & GREENE LTD.  
5 GERRARD STREET  
LONDON W1V 7LJ, ENGLAND  
(tel: 071-287-4570)

Advertising:  
Valerie Scott  
23 Stafford Road, Petersfield,  
Hants. GU32 2JF (tel: 0730-63976)

Typesetting:  
York House Typographic  
York Avenue, Hanwell,  
London W7 3HY

Printed by:  
Surrey Fine Art Press Ltd.  
Cavendish Rd., Redhill, Surrey RH1 4AH

Editor:  
MARTIN WINDROW

Editorial design by  
Victor Shreeve

UK newsagent distribution:  
AGB Impress  
22 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU  
(tel: 071-253 3456)

USA hobby trade:  
Bill Dean Books Ltd.,  
131-35 31st Avenue,  
Linden Hill, NY 11354

Canada:  
Vanwell Publishing Ltd.,  
1 Northrup Cres., PO Box 2131, Stn. B,  
St. Catharines, Ontario L2M 6P5

Australia & New Zealand:  
Gordon & Gotch Ltd.  
25-37 Huntingdale Rd.  
Burwood, Victoria 3125

South Africa:  
Intermag,  
CNA Building, 12 Laub St.,  
New Centre, Johannesburg

France & Belgium:  
Histoire & Collections,  
19 Avenue de la République, 75011 Paris  
(tel: 43-57-83-83)  
Price 32fr.; year's subscription 180fr.  
(France), 200fr. (other EEC)

Italy:  
Tutostoria, PO Box 395, 43100 Parma  
Price: L6,750; year's subscription  
L40,000

Denmark:  
Dansk Distribution  
9 VED Amagerbanen  
DK-2300 Copenhagen

Sweden:  
Plus Interpress  
Strandbergsgatan 61  
S-11289 Stockholm

Subscription service  
Military Illustrated,  
c/o Infonet,  
5 Riverpark Estate,  
Billet Lane, Berkhamsted,  
Herts, HP4 1HL, England

Publisher's subscription rates for  
12 issues (one year): UK, £30;  
other European, £50; by Airspeed — USA,  
\$75; other non-European, £60; all  
payments in sterling or US dollars.

'Military Illustrated Past & Present' is  
published monthly by Windrow & Greene Ltd.  
The subscription price is \$75 for one year.  
Second Class Postage Pending at Rahway, NJ.  
Postmaster send address corrections to  
Military Illustrated c/o Mercury Airfreight  
International Ltd. Inc. 233 Randolph Avenue,  
Avenel, New Jersey 07001, USA.

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# EDITORIAL

We are delighted to welcome to 'M' a doyen of Canadian military uniform historians, **Brigadier Jack Summers, CMM, MC, CD.** Jack describes himself as a retired professor of pharmacy living in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. He enrolled in the Canadian Militia in 1938, and retired in 1973 after serving as an infantryman, an engineer, a Vickers machine gunner, and a tank crewman. He considers himself 'basically trained'. During the war he saw active service in NW Europe, from Normandy to Germany, as a tank troop commander with 4th Canadian Armoured Division, during which campaign he was awarded the Military Cross. His lifelong interest in military history and modelling has led him into researching the dress and equipment of the Canadian Militia from 1855 to 1985. We hope that he will be contributing several future articles on Canadian front line uniforms of the World Wars.

**David Jurgella's** article reminds us of some of the problems which have to be handled behind the scenes of war films. At 43 years of age David has already spent more than 25 years as an active participant in 'living history'. A History BA from the University of Wisconsin and a Museum Practice MA from the University of Michigan, he was formerly a curator and interpretive supervisor at Fort Niagara; and is now a freelance film and historic site consultant and lecturer.

**Gordon Williamson**, born 1951, works in the Scottish Land Register; his military interests, mainly in the field of German decorations and their winners, have alternated with seven years' service in the Territorial Army with a Military Police unit. His published books include *The Iron Cross, Knights of the Iron Cross*, and *Aces of the Reich*; he has written a Men-at-Arms title on police units, and is currently working on another German subject, together with a more substantial book on Knight's Cross winners.

## Revolutionary re-enactors

Coincidentally with the publication in this issue of the second part of Jay Callahan's series on the re-created 23rd Royal Welch Fusiliers in America, we hear of the formation in Britain of a new 'living history' grouping bringing together several existing American Revolutionary period groups. The emphasis is to be on quality rather than quantity, and the avoidance of mistakes which members have encountered in other re-enactment organisations. The plan for 1990 is to recruit and to bring all uniforms and kit up to a



Gordon Williamson



David Jurgella



high standard; and to take part in a small number of public events while a more ambitious programme is planned, at home and abroad, for 1991. *The Society of the American Revolution* represents members of (British): The Royal Artillery (Crown Forces), Coldstream Regt. of Foot Guards (Crown Forces), 37th Regt. of Foot, and 47th Regt. of Foot; and (American): the 3rd NY Infantry, and the Militia Infantry (American Eagles). All groups would welcome new recruits willing to meet the high standards demanded. Close liaison is planned with groups in America. Contact addresses are: (Secretary) J. Harris, 138 Northend Avenue, Portsmouth, Hants.; (Publicity Officer) G. Bailey, 8 Warren Court, Underdown Rd., Southwick, Sussex BN42 4HN.

Members and potential recruits would do well to study the third part of Callahan's series in our August issue, which details the internal organisation and policy of the very successful RWFIA.

Jack Summers

## Video Releases to Rent: 'Tour of Duty VI — The Border' (New World: 15)

*Tour of Duty VI — The Border* consists of two more episodes from the second season of television series depicting the adventures of a company in the 196th Infantry Brigade. Bravo Company is stationed at Tan Son Nhut, near Saigon. In the first part, *I Wish It Would Rain* (directed by Bradford May), the company is ambushed on the Ho Chi Minh trail by NVA who escape across the border into Cambodia. Military policy prevents 'LT' (Stephen Caffrey) and Sgt. Zeke Anderson (Terence Knox) initiating a pursuit. Later, 'LT' and Zeke deal with a private who is mentally dis-

turbed after shooting a horribly wounded friend to put him out of his misery. In the second part, *Popular Forces* (directed by Bill L. Norton), the company operates in concert with some unreliable ARVN draftees, and 'LT's' reporter girlfriend Anne Seymour becomes lost in an enemy-held area.

Episodes from the second season suffered from an ill-conceived attempt to increase ratings by giving the stories a wider appeal. Irrelevant sub-plots precluded a strong narrative drive, and the inclusion of romantic interest marked a further concession to the conventions of

television soap-opera. The current broadcast of the series on some TV regions has revealed that several episodes from the first season (1987/8), as yet unreleased on video, were superior.

## Video Releases to Buy: 'Guts and Glory: the Rise and Fall of Oliver North' (CIC: 15) 'The Master of Ballantrae' (Video Gems: U)

Mike Robe's *Guts and Glory: The Rise and Fall of Oliver North* (1989) is an American television mini-series based on Ben Bradlee Jr.'s lengthy biography of the US Marine lieut-

enant-colonel who faced criminal charges concerning his involvement in the Iran-Contra scandal. For once the cliché 'torn from today's headlines' would be appropriate: the film was first broadcast on American television while North was awaiting the verdict on a number of charges heard before a federal grand jury.

This slightly edited version appears to have lost some sequences dealing with North's early career in the Marines. Instead, it begins rather abruptly in Vietnam in 1969, with Lt. North (David Keith) being injured in a fall from a tank while co-ordinating an attack on an enemy-held hill. Sequences deal with his service as an instructor on counter-insurgency techniques at the Marine base at Quantico, Virginia and on Okinawa,

## ON THE SCREEN

# THE AUCTION SCENE

April was a busy month for the dealers and collectors, offering the main London Arms Fair, an important sale in Monaco, the Special Spring Sale at Wallis & Wallis, as well as a top class Islamic sale in London.

This column has commented in the past on fashions in collecting, and Islamic and other Asiatic arms and armour are a good example of the changing taste. In the 1950s and 1960s Indian and other Asiatic weapons were largely ignored by collectors: Japanese swords were the exception, but they have always been well collected. Most arms and armour auctions included lots such as bundles of perhaps five or six Indian swords, and the bidding for them was usually lethargic. The reasons were various, but one was a general preference for plain, workmanlike weapons: Indian weapons tend to be decorative and often rather elaborate,

and this tended to jar with collectors conditioned by the generally severe functional forms of Western arms and armour. There was also an unjustifiable feeling that the workmanship was inferior; and these prejudices were strengthened by an ignorance of the subject. The publication of some scholarly and readable books on the subject in recent years has encouraged an appreciation of the true quality and workmanship of such pieces. As interest expanded so demand gradually increased, and inevitably prices began to climb; today they are in line with, if not ahead of, prices for many European weapons.

At the sale of Islamic Works of Art at Sotheby's on 25 April an Ottoman presentation dagger dated 1625 sold for £22,000, nearly three times the estimate. A Turkish axe head of the 15th century realised £6,000, and an Ottoman shoulder plate of the 16th

his separation from his wife Betsy, and hospitalisation at the Bethesda Naval Hospital for emotional distress.

Inevitably, the film concentrates on his activities while seconded to the National Security Council from 1981, which eventually culminated in the Iran-Contra scandal. Although the Boland Amendment forbade trading with nations involved in terrorism, North and his immediate superiors sold arms to Iran mainly to increase American influence in that country, and to obtain the release of American hostages held in Beirut. Some of the money raised was 'diverted' to fund Contra groups in Nicaragua. North is seen as a fervent anti-communist who believed that a liberal Congress was intending to let down the Contras in Nicaragua just as it had let down its own armed forces in Vietnam.

The exigencies of an American television film dictate that incidents from North's career are chosen on the basis of their visual appeal rather than their importance. Hence we do not see North's visit to Tehran with Robert McFarlane (Paul Dooley), but do see an incident — not universally believed — based on North's claims that he flew wounded members of a Salvadorean patrol to safety in a light plane while under fire from rebels. The film ends as North is indicted to appear before a Congressional committee: we do not see the televised proceedings which led to him becoming, in the eyes of many, a national hero.

Amy Stock-Poyton's part as his glamorous secretary Fawn Hall is kept to a minimum, and Bryan Clark gives a good impression as Ronald Reagan. Reagan makes his famous reassuring phone-call to North, stating that 'someday this is going to make a great movie': while this is an interesting attempt, it is no substitute for reading the book. However, David Keith conveys a patriotic

officer who lacks sufficient sophistication to anticipate the political implications of his own actions — though not the charisma which resulted in the brief phenomenon known as 'Olliemania'.

Douglas Wilcox's *The Master of Ballantrae* (1974) was a television mini-series produced by HTV, based on Robert Louis Stevenson's famous novel. It starts at the time of Bonnie Prince Charlie's abortive attempt to restore a Stuart monarchy in 1745. Two brothers, the sons of the Earl of Durisdeer (John Gielgud), argue over who should join Prince Charles. Henry (Richard Thomas), believes that as the youngest he should go, but is overruled by his older brother Jamie (Michael York), despite his betrothal to his cousin Alison. Jamie is forced to flee Scotland in the aftermath of Culloden, and has adventures in both North America and India. Meanwhile Henry, believing him to be dead, takes on the title of Earl and marries Alison. When Jamie finally returns, the scene is set for a confrontation between the brothers.

The battle of Culloden is briefly but effectively conveyed, and there is a battle at sea between a pirate ship and British frigate. The supporting cast includes Brian Blessed as the pirate Captain 'Blackbeard' Teach, and Timothy Dalton as an Irish mercenary who Jamie befriends after Culloden. The production benefits from a considerable amount of location filming in Britain: only the scenes set in India fail to convince. This struggle between two brothers is rich in Cain and Abel symbolism, and is also reminiscent of Stevenson's own *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. The film may not convey all the subtleties of the novel, and substitutes a conventional 'happy' ending, but it nonetheless compares well with other adaptations of Stevenson's historical novels.

Stephen J. Greenhill

century went for £2,400. A few years ago such prices would have been thought impossible. Although these pieces were of superior quality and interest, the same upgrading is taking place with the more ordinary items and will no doubt continue.

While the auctioneers were no doubt delighted with these prices, they must have been less happy about their Monaco sale of good-quality French militaria and weapons on 23 April. The sale was not helped by a French postal strike and an air-line dispute, both of which must have reduced the attendance. Despite these problems there were some good prices, such as 62,000 francs (roughly £6,200) for a model 1814 helmet of the Royal Bodyguard of Louis XVIII; and a gold-decorated Russian pinfire revolver sold for 42,000 francs. The well-illustrated catalogue should prove a useful reference source to collectors of French militaria.

This sale overlapped with the London Arms Fair, which attracted the usual crowds of visitors, and most of

the dealers seemed fairly happy with their business. As always armour was the scarce item; and at the other end of the scale it was interesting to note the increased sales of de-activated firearms. Several dealers were offering weapons ranging from Vickers machine guns, complete with tripod, to small revolvers. It is interesting that few of these weapons have so far appeared in auctions of arms and armour.

Despite the new legislation on shooting as a sport there were a number of dealers in modern sporting and target weapons offering some fine classic weapons. Weller & Duffy were showing a collection of most interesting early breech-loading rifles, which will excite the vintage shooters and collectors.

Militaria was much in evidence, and Wallis & Wallis were exhibiting items from their Special Spring Sale held on 25 April, an exposure which no doubt contributed to the prices achieved which were, as always at these sales, high. Some were amazing, such as £850 for a 'lobster-tail' cavalry helmet c.1640, and £1,700 for the cased blade of a Tower Yeoman Warder's partisan of the brief reign of King Edward VIII. A mint pattern 1796 light cavalry officer's sword with much original bluing fetched £1,900; and an infantry officer's sword of the same period sold for £800. A display board of Nobel's cartridges fetched £1,500, while a Long Sea Service flintlock pistol made the astonishing price of £900. This high pricing was maintained for an India pattern 'Brown Bess' flintlock musket which soared to an incredible £1,450: the important feature which was largely responsible for this figure consisted of two initials on the butt plate, 'RF', indicating that it had been issued to the Royal Fusiliers.

Wallis & Wallis also had a March sale of militaria which offered a number of interesting items, including a very rare dress helmet of the Royal Artillery worn only for a short period in the middle of the 19th century; considering its rarity it went for the very reasonable price of £850. This figure is all the more reasonable when compared with £400 for a Waffen-SS fur cap which in general terms is modern and mass produced. Interest in Third Reich material continues to be as high as ever, and will no doubt be further stimulated by the sales and events which are being organised to coincide with the 50th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain. The emphasis will no doubt be on aeronautica, which has always been popular, and a recent publication by Acme Publishers is obviously aimed at these enthusiasts. Entitled *Flight Equipment of the RAF 1920-1945*, it lists and illustrates a wide range of British equipment as well as including the Air Ministry reference numbers. It will be interesting to see how the number of sales and associated events interact with one another, and how the concentration on this type of item over a short, intense period will affect prices in the longer term.

Frederick Wilkinson

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# British Commandos in the Field 1942-45 (I)

BRIEN HOBBS Paintings by PAUL HANNON

The Commando soldier's appearance on the battlefield in World War II, in terms of dress, insignia and personal equipment, has always been thought of as cap-comforter and battledress sporting little, if any, insignia. In fact the Commandos' appearance varied considerably as the war developed their rôle from that of small, lightly equipped units making excursions into enemy-held territory, to that of an assault brigade designed to punch out and hold a bridgehead, in the teeth of considerable opposition if necessary.

These changes required adjustments to the Commando unit's order of battle, and the amount of heavy weapons available for each task, such as 3in. mortars, Vickers MMGs and so on. Of necessity, this brought about trials of new personal equipment, such as the Battle Jerkin and 'A'-frame bergen rucksack, as the individual was now required to carry enough ammunition to sustain not only himself, for far longer periods than envisaged in 1940, but also mortar bombs, food, spare clothing, mines, radio batteries, and other paraphernalia that might be required by the unit as a whole.

Attitudes to insignia varied considerably, not only at brigade level but also between units, particularly in 1944 when the Royal Marine Commandos were at full strength, interwoven with the Army Commandos. While the available evidence

is still not comprehensive, this article will trace these variations as far as they can be confirmed by photographs and the personal reminiscences of surviving veterans. (Readers will find background information, particu-



## Above

A splendid illustration of members of No. 3 Cdo. after the Dieppe raid: the right hand man wears the black ball insignia of 5 Tp. on his left arm. (Imperial War Museum)

## Right:

A corporal of the Royal Marine 'A' Commando after the Dieppe raid: he wears the appropriate shoulder titles. Of particular interest is the 'Fanny' knuckle-duster knife rarely seen in latter years. Also prominent is the Assault Life Jacket that saved the lives of so many of the unit, whose craft were sunk while attempting to land under heavy fire. (Hulton-Deutsch)

larly on the period 1940-41, in W.Y. Carman's articles in 'MI' Nos. 10 and 11.)

## St. Nazaire, 1942

Notable Commando operations in 1942 saw the demise of the plethora of individual badges and shoulder titles that had sprung up since formation. By Operation 'Torch' in November the new series of Combined Operations insignia had been introduced. Prior to this, however, there were two raids worthy of note — St. Nazaire and Dieppe — and the landings in Madagascar.

Operation 'Chariot', the raid on the dry dock at St. Nazaire, was carried out on 28 March 1942 by No. 2 Cdo. and demolition parties from various other units. Prior to reaching Falmouth, the embarkation port, all ranks were ordered to remove unit

signs and shoulder titles for security reasons, only rank badges being worn<sup>(1)</sup>. Steel helmets were the only items of headgear authorised for the raiding force, except for the Royal Navy boat crews.

'The only exceptional items of equipment were our small "fighting knives" sewn into our uniforms, sleeves or trousers; and the few that had "Tommy Guns" were issued with Roman Swords. I had never seen them before or since . . .' (This latter weapon was also known as a machett<sup>(2)</sup>.) Some Scottish members of No. 2 Cdo.<sup>(3)</sup> and No. 5 Cdo.'s demolition party chose to don kilts for the operation, with a khaki 'apron' over the top. Webbing was scrubbed white to assist immediate identification.

No. 2 Cdo. and ancillaries were virtually annihilated, having been used as a 'one-shot weapon' at St. Nazaire. Although it was an extremely successful action, a high proportion of the raiders were killed or captured.

#### **Madagascar, 1942**

On 5 May 1942 No. 5 Cdo. took part in the assault on Madagascar; it was feared that the Vichy French would allow their port facilities to be used by the Japanese, and the landings were intended to neutralise this threat. The initial task for No. 5 Cdo. was to land a few hours prior to the main assault to eliminate two artillery batteries. Having done this, they took part in several other minor landings before being withdrawn to Britain in early November.

Most of the unit wore khaki drill shirts with 'Bombay bloomers', the latter being rolled up during the day and secured with buttons. At night they were unrolled and tucked into socks to minimise the risk of malaria. Steel helmets were worn initially, before troops reverted to the khaki Balmoral, with the wearer's original cap badge<sup>(4)</sup>, or none at all. All weapons and equipment were standard issue.

#### **Dieppe, 1942**

The Dieppe operation in August was launched to test

the feasibility of capturing a major, heavily defended port. Three Commando units, Nos. 3, 4 and the Royal Marine 'A' Commando, plus attached ranks, Frenchmen of No. 10 Inter-Allied (IA) Commando, and a small party of American Rangers, took part. This event provides a splendid example of individual units going their own way with regard to battledress and insignia.

No. 3 Cdo. took part wearing full unit insignia: the shoulder title '3 COMMANDO' in midnight blue<sup>(5)</sup> with white lettering, with, in most cases, the Troop numeral beneath — a small midnight blue square with the number in white. Also notable was the black ball sign of 5 Tp. worn below these on the left arm. The steel helmet was worn by all No. 3 personnel present.

No. 4 Cdo. wore denim battledress with no insignia whatsoever, and cap-comforters as opposed to steel helmets. This order was passed on by Lord Lovat to those members of the French Troop, No. 10 IA Cdo. accompanying No. 4. Those with No. 3 Cdo., however, wore full insignia, with 'FRANCE' shoulder titles (white lettering on khaki) above midnight blue and white 'COMMANDO' title, and a tricolour shield with Cross of Lorraine worn on the right arm. (This last was later worn as a beret badge; but replaced prior to D-Day — it was never worn on the beret in action.) On the left arm was either an anchor or a grenade sign denoting Navy or Army status respectively. Naval caps and rank badges were also worn.

Some members of the Royal Marine 'A' Cdo. wore two straight-edged shoulder titles: 'ROYAL MARINES' in red on dark blue, and 'COMMANDO' in the same colours sewn directly underneath. When the Combined Operations series of insignia was introduced this unit adopted the curved 'COMMANDO' title, deleting the RM title, above the arch-shaped Combined Ops. badge<sup>(6)</sup>.



#### **Left:**

Included for interest's sake, and typical of the early period: TQMS Henry Brown wears the green-on-khaki '1 COMMANDO' shoulder title with Salamander badge beneath — these were never worn in action. Some of his webbing is of American origin. (H. Brown)

#### **Below:**

An 'O' Group of three officers from the Polish Tp. in the middle of 1944, by this time detached from No. 10 Inter-Allied Cdo.; it shows insignia to advantage, including British parachute wings. (Sikorski Institute)

#### **Bottom:**

This photograph dated a few weeks earlier is particularly unusual in that one of the group wears the Polish diving eagle parachute badge, albeit without the wreath indicating an operational descent. Note the Polish rank badges, and that the unit number has been deleted from the shoulder title. (Sikorski Institute)



*Just prior to embarkation for Normandy; 6 Tp. No. 6 Cdo. enjoy a mug of tea. Despite the censor's unwelcome attention, the parachute insignia can be clearly seen, worn on the right arm. As in No. 4 Cdo., no Combined Ops. badges were worn by parachutists; regimental cap badges have been removed by most of the group. The khaki 'A' frame bergen is shown here; this item was still seen in use less than ten years ago. In the centre of the group a SNCO or officer is present; although no rank badges are worn, obvious signs of his status are the binoculars and the holstered pistol. (Imperial War Museum)*

(In Italy members of 40 RM Cdo. wore the 'COMMANDO' title in both straight and curved form prior to adopting full straight-edged titles, with unit number above and circular Combined Ops. badge below. It is not known exactly when this transition took place but it is thought to have been early in 1944.)

#### Tunisia, 1942

The final operation of any note in 1942 was Operation 'Torch', the landings in North Africa. Nos. 1 and 6 Cdos. took part<sup>(7)</sup>, both equipped with the Garand M1 rifle, although they retained their Bren LMGs<sup>(8)</sup>. Both units also wore American steel helmets in the initial phase, the hope being that the French might be reluctant to fire on ostensibly American forces<sup>(9)</sup>. (The bombardment of the French fleet in Oran by British ships in 1940 caused considerable ill feeling.) These helmets were soon discarded, although the Garand rifles were retained. A colour photograph of the period<sup>(10)</sup>, taken by German captors of prisoners belonging to No. 1 Cdo., clearly shows the red on midnight blue 'No. 1 COMMANDO' shoulder title and the Combined Ops. badge in its original arch shape; some of the men also wear their green berets.

Later, No. 1 Cdo. removed these insignia, although No. 6 Cdo. certainly still had theirs during severe fighting with elements of Parachute Regt. Koch on the Goubellat plains in Tunisia<sup>(11)</sup>. No. 6 Cdo. handed in their Garand rifles after the Tunisian cam-



paign, going on to use British weapons in Normandy.

#### Belgian and Polish Troops; Mediterranean Interlude, 1943-44

In December 1943, 4 (Belgian) and 6 (Polish) Troops of No. 10 IA Cdo. arrived in Italy under command of 2nd Special Service Brigade. Both were detached to gain battle experience in the mountainous region near the River Sangro, deployed under 56th Recce Regiment.

After seeing considerable activity, the Belgian Troop took part as reserve in the assault on Monte Ornito with No. 9 Cdo. and 43 RM Commando. The Polish Troop, meanwhile, joined 40 RM Cdo. under command of 56th Div. in the crossing of the Garigliano. The Belgians were then moved to Vis, participating in many small actions as raiding/boarding parties before returning to the United Kingdom. The Poles were placed temporarily under 2nd Polish Corps in April 1944; this state of affairs became permanent in August after the Troop took part in the Monte Cassino battle, being severely mauled in the process. The Polish Troop was eventually incorporated into the 2nd Motorised Bn. (Commando).

Both Troops wore the full Combined Ops. series of insignia, inclusive of nationality titles (the CO badge being circular). The

Belgians were less inclined to wear insignia in the field, in contrast to the Poles. The latter also wore Polish badges of rank, while the Belgians wore British; both tended to wear the green beret in action with appropriate cap badges. Two types of parachute badge were worn in the Polish Troop: the Polish qualification above the left breast in the conventional way, but with the British wings worn beneath the CO badge on the right arm — no insignia being deleted<sup>(12)</sup>. Even when they were under Polish command, this insignia was worn throughout the war, even, in some cases, with Polish divisional insignia.

Winter combat snowsuits and white RN pullovers were issued in 1944 for use in the mountains. The former's top was similar to a shortened dufflecoat with wooden toggle fasteners. It was worn with overtrousers, although these apparently didn't arrive until the Belgians were on Vis. Unlike other Commando units, the Polish Troop never acquired Denison smocks.

#### FROM NORMANDY TO GERMANY

Both 1st and 4th Special Service Brigades landed on 6 June as part of the British Liberation Army; they provide excellent examples of superficial similarities with unit idiosyncrasies.

All Commando soldiers participating in the Normandy landings wore full insignia; however, there were minor differences, particularly in 1st SS Brigade. The 4th SS Bde. at that time consisted entirely of Royal Marine units: Nos. 41, 46, 47 and 48 RM Commandos. All RM Commandos wore the straight-edged, dark blue title strips with red lettering. The unit number was worn on top, set in a small square, with the 'ROYAL MARINES' title beneath, with the 'COMMANDO' title below that. These were supposed to touch, with the unit number sewn directly beneath the epaulette seam on the shoulder. Naturally enough, this was not always the case; the unit number was sometimes deleted, and the spacing between titles varied considerably. These insignia were worn on both arms, with the Combined Ops. badge worn below shoulder titles but above rank badges.

Meanwhile, in 1st SS Bde., the sole RM Cdo., No. 45, differed slightly from the above in that the majority of its members wore the Army-type curved 'COMMANDO' title (also designating brigade troops not allocated to an individual unit). This title had midnight blue as the background colour, as did all other insignia previously detailed, all items being of woven material<sup>(13)</sup>.

The Army Commandos, Nos. 3, 4 and 6, wore the conventional curved shoulder title in midnight blue with red lettering, for example 'No 3 COMMANDO'. Some Army personnel were attached to Royal Marine units and vice-versa. A photograph of L/Cpl. Harden (later to win the Victoria Cross at Montfortebeck) clearly shows full insignia for No. 45 RM Cdo.; as none of the group ('A' Tp.) are wearing cap badges, no visible difference can be discerned<sup>(14)</sup>. Cap badges seem to have been very much a case of individual preference — see accompanying photographs.

The area in which nearly all units in 1st SS Bde. differed

was in that of the parachute Troops: E Tp. 45 RM Cdo., 3(P) Tp. 3 Cdo., C Tp. 4 Cdo., and 6 Tp. 6 Commando. One Troop from each Commando was para-trained in 1944. The reason for this is obscure, although a handful of Commandos jumped into Normandy as liaison men with the 6th Airborne Division.

Those ranks so qualified wore their parachute insignia as follows. No. 45 RM Cdo. deleted the Combined Ops. badge on the right arm only, substituting parachute wings; insignia on the left arm remained unchanged<sup>(15)</sup>. No. 3 Cdo. simply placed the parachute wings between the unit title and the Combined Ops. badge on the right arm; insignia on the left arm remained unchanged<sup>(16)</sup>. Nos. 4 and 6 Cdos. deleted the Combined Ops. badges altogether, simply wearing unit titles on both shoulders with parachute wings beneath on the right arm only. As far as 4th SS Bde. is concerned, the author is unaware of organised bodies of parachutists. If any man so qualified it would most likely have been on an individual basis, and he would have been badged as 45 RM Commando.

Elements of No. 10 IA Cdo. served with both brig-

ades: the French Troops under Philippe Kieffer serving with No. 4 Cdo. and members of '3' or 'X' Troop with each unit on an individual basis. The Frenchmen officially wore the 'No 4 COMMANDO' shoulder title, although there is no doubt that the 'No 10 COMMANDO' title was worn in some cases instead. No reason has been advanced for this, other than that of spare battledress worn in lieu of wet or torn items.

Parachutists wore the conventional parachute wings on the lower right forearm. Two exceptions were as follows: Lt. Vourch, who qualified with SOE, wore the 'lightbulb' (for qualified parachutists in the non-airborne rôle); Lt. Pinelli qualified with Polish forces and wore the diving eagle qualification on his chest<sup>(17)</sup>. The beret badge was the bronze shield of the 1st Naval Fusiliers Cdo. (worn up to the end of the war), and rank badges were those of the French navy. Two interesting photographs taken at this time, seen by the author, show the green sleeveless parachutist equipment cover used as a jerkin by one Frenchman<sup>(18)</sup>; and another wearing an SS camouflage smock tucked into battledress trousers.

The author is unable to establish exactly what insignia

was worn by 3/X Tp., but feels that brigade insignia is the most likely; cap badges of various types were worn, including that of 17/21st Lancers and the brown plastic General Service Corps badge, plus those of various Home County regiments. Members of 3/X Tp. were parachute trained with the Norwegian Troop. Officially the wings were to be worn on the upper right arm, as with the Polish Tp.; however, a former member of 3/X Tp. recalls wearing his above the left breast pocket. He also states that the wings were sometimes seen above the right breast pocket, or on the forearm<sup>(19)</sup>.

Commanding officers were given the option as to whether their unit should land wearing steel helmets or berets. No. 45 RM Cdo., for example, handed their steel helmets back into store before setting out for France. Sgt. Byrne, in his book *The General Salutes a Soldier*, describes No. 6 Cdo. as landing in best battledress, 'bulled' boots and cap badges, with pipe-clayed rank insignia<sup>(20)</sup>. The majority of units certainly landed wearing steel helmets, but most discarded them after the first day or so. Each individual kept his original issue helmet from his parent regiment or corps,

including the type for armoured crewmen and, in the case of the parachute Troop, their airborne type.

Many veterans have said that Denison smocks were also worn, although these were not on general issue to units of 1st and 4th SS Bdes. until late 1944. Their proximity to the airborne units in the line naturally meant that this sort of equipment would change hands.

#### Equipment and weapons

Some troops took bicycles ashore, due to the necessity of reaching the Airborne Div. as rapidly as possible. Added to personal equipment were the usual impedimenta: 3in. mortar bombs, Vickers machine guns and so on. These would have been dumped after the landing itself and brought inland on a handcart — a type of wheelbarrow of wood and canvas — or by jeep.

Also available to certain units was the Vickers 'K' gun, originally mounted on aircraft. It was deployed in small numbers to provide additional firepower in the forward defensive positions because of its fearsome rate of fire. It was impractical in many ways due to the amount of ammunition expended, and was discarded after the breakout<sup>(21)</sup>. Ammunition drums were required, carried in circular pouches similar to those for Lewis gun magazines in the Great War, rigged to '37 pattern webbing. Heavy weapons men and Bren gunners usually carried a Colt .45 pistol in a holster on the right hip. The Bren group would also wear auxiliary pouches in dark brown canvas to carry sufficient magazines.

German weapons, particularly the MP40, were very popular; many men used this weapon in preference to their own, particularly if they were unfortunate enough to carry a Sten (issued in small numbers to the Commandos, the

Men of No. 4 Cdo. in the first few days of the Normandy campaign. Of interest is the fact that only shoulder titles are worn; a possible clue is the right hand stretcher bearer wearing parachute wings on his right arm. (Imperial War Museum)



3



2



1



Paul Hannon's reconstructions illustrate:

(1) Corporal, Royal Marines 'A' Commando, 1942, after disembarking on return from the Dieppe raid. Of particular interest are the red on dark blue shoulder titles; and the fighting knife secured in the gaiter. Note also the early use of the 'A' frame rucksack. The gaiters are finished in the early green blanco, KGO3.

(2) Sniper, 'E' Troop, No.45 RM Cdo., Normandy 1944.

His insignia are the darker cloth variant, as used by the other units in 1st Special Service Brigade. Noteworthy are the curved 'COMMANDO' title below the conventional straight-edged title, and the parachutist's badge worn in place of the Combined Operations insignia on the right arm only. While 'on task' the Denison smock would be worn; otherwise the insignia would generally be removed by these specialists. The weapon is the No. 4 Mk.1(T) rifle.

(3) No.3 Commando, Holland, 1945.

Typical of the late-war appearance of the Commando soldier. The Denison smock and bergen rucksack, on general issue to almost all Commando units in Europe by this time, were to soldier on for another 25 years almost unmodified. The weapon is the twin-grip, M1928 Thompson.

Thompson .45 SMG being far more common). Later on, when units were approaching Germany, the Panzerfaust also became popular as a house-clearing weapon. Its British counterpart, the PIAT, was only of any use against armour at the most suicidal ranges, although it was considered reasonably effective as a mortar. Many MG42s were utilised for defence at the Orne bridgehead, but they were not retained by the units once on the move again. (In fact, they were collected and buried in old slit trenches.)

Most of the assault troops of these units carried the 'A' frame bergen rucksack made of khaki canvas, as opposed to the normal '37 pattern packs; in 45 RM Cdo. these were camouflage-painted. (This unit's webbing and gaiters were blanccoed a light green colour as opposed to the usual dirt-yellow.) However, 3(P) Tp. 3 Cdo., for example, wore the '37 pattern large pack conventionally, with the small pack hung on the left side over the bayonet. No. 3 Cdo. also wore a combination of battledress blouse

with denim trousers, as opposed to full battledress.

The 'Battle Jerkin', also referred to as the 'Assault Jacket', was on issue in small numbers to most units, 47 RM Cdo. being the sole unit to be completely equipped. This item was thoroughly disliked for various reasons, although it proved popular with units in Italy. No. 46 RM Cdo. were very unfortunate in that their landing was heavily opposed, many landing craft being sunk. The Battle Jerkin, when soaked, is not only very heavy, but extremely difficult to remove *in extremis*; no doubt many men lost their lives as a result. Another set-back for this unit was that when it finally assembled ashore, only two Troops (B and X) were intact, and almost all the heavy weapons had been lost. The capture of Port-en-Bessin by 47 RM Cdo. was completed largely with enemy weapons, the unit not being fully re-equipped for about a month.

Apart from the conventional canvas bandoliers used by all troops, another method of carrying small arms

ammunition was to sew cut-down lengths of Vickers gun cloth belt to the battledress (typically above the map pocket or on the outside of the blouse sleeves). These would contain .303 rounds of various types (tracer, armour-piercing, ball, etc) placed in such a way that the firer could select particular types of ammunition in pitch darkness. Sniping pairs, in particular, found this useful (22).

Considerable effort was put into harassment of the enemy, particularly by sniping. A simple headdress utilising the camouflage face veil was considered sufficient camouflage for the task. During static periods snipers frequently operated at extreme ranges. However, the No. 4 Mk.1(T) rifle with telescopic sights was not required in every case. The Normandy countryside being much broken up by hedgerows and woodland, the technique thought most effective by some exponents was to get so close to the target that one couldn't miss — it was found that the best target shots were not always the best snipers.

In September 1944, 1st SS Bde. were withdrawn to Britain; meanwhile 4th SS Bde. were to secure Walcheren Island as part of operations to clear the port of Antwerp. At this time the brigade consisted of: 41 RM, 47 RM, 48 RM Cdos., and No. 4 Cdo. inclusive of French Troops (46 RM Cdo. were transferred to 1st SS Bde. in lieu of No. 4 Cdo. until the end of the war). Also attached were the Dutch (23), Belgian and Norwegian troops of No. 10 IA Commando. The 1st Cdo. Bde. (all units were retitled in December 1944) returned to the fray in January 1945.

All Commando soldiers received the Denison smock at this time, those in 4th SS

*Members of 48 RM Cdo. after crossing the Maas in 1945; their appearance is typical of the late war Commando; note the shell dressings tied to the epaulettes of their Denison smocks. One of the right hand group has two Eiergranate fixed to his waist belt. Almost all wear cap badges, the officers differing in that the crown was separate from the Globe and Laurel. The gaiters have been blackened, a definite post-war trend with RM Commandos. (Royal Marines Museum)*



Bde. in time for the Walcheren assault (Operation 'Infatuate'), which took place on 1 November 1944. No greatcoats were issued for use in the field, the leather jerkin being worn under the Denison for additional protection. Every second man carried a snowsuit. These were found to be impractical as they became noisy when frozen, making a swishing sound in movement similar to that of modern plastic waterproofs<sup>(24)</sup>. The camouflaged wind-proof jacket appeared on an individual basis (like the Denison in Normandy), possibly obtained via the 52nd Lowland Div., a mountain warfare unit engaged at Walcheren.

At this stage the only visible difference between

units was the cap badge worn by the individual. Berets were worn almost continuously, the steel helmet making its last general appearance at Walcheren.

By this time the Dutch Tp. had adopted a metal cap badge on black ground, the cloth beret badge, previously worn, going between the shoulder title and Combined Ops. badge on the left arm. (Naturally, unit insignia were obscured by the Denison smock in action.) Royal Marines wore their 'Globe and Laurel', the crown being separate in the case of officers or WOs. Units either blackened the badge with paint or left it to tarnish. (For further information on cap badges see 'M1' Nos. 10 and 11, articles cited.)

Webbing and equipment had been generally standardised, 47 RM Cdo. having gratefully relinquished their Battle Jerkins by the time of Walcheren. However, some members of the Norwegian Tp. chose to wear these for the Walcheren landing, although it is not known if they were retained afterwards<sup>(25)</sup>. Bren magazine auxiliary

pouches were still very much in use; and the bergen rucksack had generally superseded both small and large packs by this time.

A handy item in use in all theatres was a golden-yellow cloth triangle approximately 3ft. wide at the base, edged with white reinforcing strips, and with thumb loops either side of the base. The apex was squared off and attached to the battledress collar, round the neck. It was normally stowed inside the jacket. To avoid being strafed when friendly aircraft (typically Typhoons) were engaging enemy positions, the Commando lay down facing the enemy, looping his thumbs into the base corners and extending his arms. Hopefully, this would show the limit of exploitation of forward troops to aircraff, thus avoiding friendly casualties.

MI

**To be continued:** Part 2 will cover Sicily, Italy, the Far East, RN Beach Parties and FOBs, and 30 Commando.

#### Notes:

(1) After the Battle, No. 59, dealing with St. Nazaire, shows a photograph of a sergeant from No. 5 Cdo.

who seems to wear, despite instructions to the contrary, the 'V-shaped' fighting knife badge on his left shoulder, although it is not possible to see this clearly enough to confirm. (2) Letter to the author from Col. Stuart Chant-Sempill. This weapon is also called a 'Smatchett', possibly an American term. It saw service in various units not so much as a weapon, but to clear fields of fire, undergrowth and so on.

(3) The majority of 5 Tp. at this time were from the Liverpool Scottish. The kilt was of Forbes tartan. Kilts continued to be worn with battle-dress blouses as walking-out dress — e.g. in Italy — by members of No. 2 Cdo. Douglas Fitton of this unit wore a kilt of Leslie tartan although coming from the KOSB, a Lowland regiment: he was given special dispensation for this — as far as the author is aware, a unique occurrence. He joined No. 2 Cdo. after the St. Nazaire operation.

(4) On a contemporary photograph in Squadron/Signal's *British Commandos in Action*, a square of dark material can be seen backing the badge, probably deep bottle green. Another photo in a 1943 publication on Combined Operations shows the Balmoral/Tam-o'-Shanter devoid of any decoration.

(5) Reference to colour, conversation with veterans of 3 Cdo. — possibly a result of fading?

(6) Photograph of the Royal Marine 'A' Cdo. ostensibly taken in August 1942 shows curved 'COMMANDO' title above arch-shaped Combined Ops. badge on both arms. These men also wear both cap-comforter and FS sidecap, the latter worn as

4 Tp. No. 3 Cdo. disembarking in the United Kingdom just at the end of hostilities in Europe. Most of the group are wearing the Denison smock. The SNCO in the centre is Sgt. Hampson. On the right is a figure in battledress still wearing the Combined Ops. badge. The author has seen no evidence of the dagger badge worn by field units prior to September 1945, although training units may have adopted this earlier. (R. Cubitt)



barrack headdress until the adoption of the green beret. The author is dubious about the date, however, as it precedes the introduction of this insignia. This unit's webbing was blancco pale green. (*The Commandos*, Derek Oakley.)

(7) At one stage with elements of US 168th Regimental Combat Team under command, some of whom remained until the end of January 1943. This may account for the illustration of an apparently locally manufactured 6 Cdo. title on US Army uniform — see 'MT' No. 10.

(8) Considered to be an extremely effective combination, the only drawback with the Garand being the ejection of the clip from the top of the weapon as the last round is fired. Comments on expenditure of ammunition are considered invalid by the author, as this is the responsibility of the user, not the weapon; the two different kinds of ammunition were the main problem *vis-à-vis* resupply.

(9) Veterans have said that American 'windbreaker jackets' were also worn initially, i.e. M41 field jackets.

(10) Signal No. 5 1943

(11) *Clash By Night*, Derek Mills-Roberts.

(12) Although the 'No. 10 COMMANDO' title was worn by several members into 1944 and probably to the end of the war, many men wore a shortened 'COMMANDO' title, deleting unit number. This may have been a result of coming under Polish jurisdiction.

(13) A photograph taken at the end of the war shows the curved title being worn by the CO of 46 RM Cdo., Lt. Col. T.M. Gray, at an investiture. It

is likely that all of this unit were similarly badged on joining 1st Cdo. Brigade. (*Marines at War*, Ian Dear.) (14) Photograph in *Four-Five*, David Young.

(15) Photograph in *Commando Men*, Bryan Samain.

(16) Photograph in *British Commandos in Action*, Squadron/Signal.

(17) Maj. De Jonghe of 10 IA Cdo., at that time wearing Commando D flash, wore parachute wings below Combined Ops. badge on right arm, as did a corporal of Headquarters Tp. and members of 6 (Polish) Tp. 10 IA Commando.

(18) Photograph in *British Commandos in Action*, Squadron/Signal. Also worn by members of No.3 Commando.

(19) This contributor, who wishes to maintain complete anonymity, qualifies his remarks thus: '... I have worn it above the left breast pocket as it was considered a bit more "flash". There is, of course, some room for entitlement to wear it there, if one did ops with units who wore the sabre wings there. That too was forbidden later but often ignored.' In Ian Deer's excellent book *10 Commando*, a member of 3/X Tp. can be seen wearing parachute wings with black background material on his right forearm. Other members of the same troop wear the AFV crewman's one-piece combination, Germany 1945. The former 3/X Tp. member also remarked on cap badges '... badges would sometimes be changed or worn on a whim. The host unit's badge was an example of that, if one was attached. I know of a joke 'Free Austria' shoulder badge made by a landlady and actually worn (I believe) in London.'

(20) Sgt. Jack Byrne, former SAS, did not wear the SAS type parachute badge, but the ordinary qualification wings. Photograph in *The General Salutes a Soldier*.

(21) No. 6 Cdo. used these weapons into Germany.

(22) Photograph in *Four-Five*, David Young.

(23) Some members of the Dutch Tp. were involved in Operation 'Market Garden' for duties involving liaison and interpretation.

(24) The snowsuit was of very similar cut to the camouflaged wind-proof suit.

(25) Photograph in *10 Commando*.

**Acknowledgements:** I would very much like to thank all those members of the Commando Association who provided invaluable help in the preparation of these articles. Here are but a few: H. Brown, 1 Cdo.; S.O. Buckmaster, 2 Cdo.; R. Cubitt/S. Scott, 3 Cdo.; K. Philpott, 4 Cdo.; L. Arthur, 5 Cdo.; S. Stewart, 6 Cdo.; J. Quarrie, 9 Cdo.; M. Chauvet, 10 IA Cdo.; Maj. J.C. Beadle, 40 RM Cdo.; F. Harris/Lt. B. Samain, 45 RM Cdo.; F. Wildman, 47 RM Cdo.; C. Pitt, 48 RM Cdo.; R. McClean, 1st Cdo. Bde.; S. Brooks, 3rd SS Bde.; R. Owen, RN Cdo.; A.A. Parr, 3 Unit COBU; also K. Barbarski of the Sikorski Institute, and W.Y. Carman for his help and advice.

# The American Civil War Recreated on Screen and on the Page

In late March this year Edward Zwick's film *Glory* (UK certificate 15) won two Academy Awards. As it is the most widely publicised — and arguably the best — historical war film to be released for some years, 'MT' felt it worth reviewing for readers. We couple Stephen Greenhill's notice with the reminiscences of one of the 'white officers' recruited for the re-created '54th Massachusetts Infantry' from among the American Civil War re-enactment community; and with a note on a new book published at the end of this month which is an impressive tribute to the standards achieved by such re-enactors in other contexts.

## 'Glory'

STEPHEN J.  
GREENHILL

abolitionists and friends of leading Northern black figures such as Frederick Douglass, Shaw is offered by Massachusetts Governor Andrew the command of the new 54th Massachusetts Infantry, which is to be the first black regiment to be raised in the North. Shaw agrees, and persuades former college classmate Cabot Forbes (Cary Elwes) to join his staff. His first volunteers include Searles (Andre Braugher), an educated young free black and childhood friend; Trip (Denzel Washington), a cynical runaway slave; and Sharts (Jihmi Kennedy), a fieldhand from South Carolina.

At Readville Camp, Massachusetts, the volunteers undergo basic drill instruction at the hands of the tough Irish Sgt. Mulcahy (John Finch), who has little respect for their potential. Shaw's problems are exacerbated by the inherent racial prejudice of his brother officers; many believe that the blacks will be incapable of operating effectively under fire. When the local Quartermaster deliberately withholds sorely needed clothing from men who have chosen to serve despite the Confederate threat of summary execution, Shaw is driven to intervene forcefully to secure his regiment's equipment. The eventual arrival of



*Matthew Broderick as the 25-year-old Colonel Robert Gould Shaw, commander of the 54th Massachusetts Infantry. (Tri-Star Pictures Inc.)*

**Below right:**

*Morgan Freeman as Sergeant-Major Rawlins of the 54th Massachusetts. (Tri-Star Pictures Inc.)*

**Bottom:**

*The parade of the 54th Mass. through the streets of Boston in May 1863, as recreated for the film Glory. (Tri-Star Pictures Inc.)*

shoes, uniforms, and imported Enfield rifles raises the unit's morale. In May 1863 the thousand-strong 54th Massachusetts parade confidently through the streets of Boston in their first public appearance, *en route* for South Carolina.

**Into battle**

Shaw soon realises that his senior officers secretly intend to keep the regiment perma-

nently assigned to labour and picket duties away from the front lines, and eventually resorts to blackmail to win them the opportunity to prove themselves in battle. They acquit themselves well in an action on 16 July 1863 at James Island, South Carolina. However, the real test comes when Shaw volunteers to lead an assault on Fort Wagner, a strong position guarding the approaches to Charleston harbour which has withstood sustained naval bombardment. The fort is held by some 1,600 Confederates with strong artillery, and is only approachable on a narrow front along the beach. On 18 July Shaw leads his 600-odd men in an afternoon charge along the beach under concentrated cannon and rifle fire.

Pinned down in the dunes until nightfall, the 54th make a final desperate assault over the dry ditch and up the walls of the sand and log fort. Many are killed by point-blank artillery and musketry, grenades and rockets. The fighting on the ramparts is decided by bayonets and



clubbed muskets. This extraordinary and terrifyingly realistic battle sequence alone justifies the price of an admission ticket. The 54th suffered 44 per cent casualties in the actual assault, including Col. Shaw; and Sgt. John Carney won the first Congressional Medal of Honor awarded to a black serviceman (of 17 awarded to black soldiers and sailors during the Civil War). The film's epigraph suggests that Fort Wagner never fell; this is not historically accurate — it was forced to surrender two months later after saps had been dug up to the walls, and the 54th Massachusetts were present at the surrender.

Matthew Broderick, a convincing likeness for the 25-year-old Shaw, copes well with the difficult task of portraying a shy and introverted young idealist given enormous responsibility. The

supporting cast is excellent, particularly Morgan Freeman as 'John Rawlins', a gravedigger whom Shaw first meets at Antietam and who is destined to become the regiment's first sergeant-major. Kevin Jarre's screenplay was based on Lincoln Kirstein's book *Lay This Laurel*, on Peter Burchard's *One Gallant Rush*, and on Shaw's own letters, some of which are used early in the film in voice-over.

Scenes were filmed at several historical locations including Savannah, the old Central Georgia Railroad roundhouse in Battlefield Park (which represents Readville Camp), and Myrtle Grove Plantation. The two Oscars awarded to *Glory* were for cinematography and sound, and both seem well deserved — the soundtrack is noticeably more realistic than in most war films. The pro-

duction required thousands of extras, and was only made possible by the use of re-enactment groups. Uniforms and equipment seem scrupulously accurate, at least for Union troops — an American costume expert was not quite so impressed with the (fairly brief) Confederate sequences. Initial second-unit work began at the 125th anniversary re-enactment of the battle of Gettysburg in July 1988. Props included some of Robert Gould Shaw's surviving possessions; and Fort Wagner was realistically recreated on Jekyll Island off the coast of southern Georgia.

A feature film is not a documentary, and for legitimate dramatic purposes some small liberties have been taken with history — as in every historical film ever made. (The only one which seems worth mentioning is an anachronistic scene in

which a member of the 54th is flogged for a disciplinary offence: in fact flogging had been abolished in the US Army in 1861, and a white colonel of a black regiment was cashiered for using corporal punishment.)

None of the minor reservations can detract from the extraordinary quality of this film; it is arguably the most accurate portrayal of life in a Civil War regiment, and of the realities of mid-19th century battle, ever to reach the screen in a major motion picture. It has set new standards which will be difficult to equal, let alone surpass.

*A climatic moment from the night battle scenes on the ramparts of Fort Wagner: Maj. Forbes (Cary Elwes), Sgt. Maj. Rawlins, and Pte. Searles (Andre Braugher) lit by a rocket as they fight for a lodgement on the walls. (Tri-Star Pictures Inc.)*



# One Week of 'Glory'

DAVID L. JURGELLA

**D**uring the filming of *Glory* the author, a 25-year veteran of 'living history' groups and for four years an officer in Civil War re-enactment events, found himself faced with much the same task as the original cadre of the 54th Massachusetts. He arrived at Jekyll Island, Georgia, more or less 'on spec'; most of the re-enactor officers had already been placed, and he had little idea what might be required of him. The week that followed proved illuminating.

**O**n Jekyll Island I found people I knew in the re-enactment circle already working. Brian Pohanka and Bill Gwaltney had raised a company of the 54th Mass. in the Washington DC area; other white 'officers' and black 'NCOs' had raised companies of black re-enactors in various parts of the country, not only to work on the film but also in the hope of continuing in the hobby after it was completed. These re-enactors were mostly people with commitments, who could only stay for part of the whole 12 weeks — specifically, the two weeks' filming of the battle sequences on Jekyll Island — and finding enough black volunteers who could stay for the whole filming period was a problem.

Some serving US Army personnel from nearby Fort Stewart were recruited, and required very little training or supervision to turn them into convincing members of the 54th Massachusetts. I was initially assigned to 'Com-

pany I', made up of these serving soldiers; but after one afternoon I was asked to take over 'Company D', just before the filming of the final night battle. The white re-enactor officer who had been working with 'Co.D' apparently wanted to return to his re-enactor company; he did not seem too happy. Thus I became permanently assigned to 'Co.D', and with the help of my associate Dale Fetzer I was given officer's pay. My most realistic experience in 25 years of 'living history' was about to begin.

'Co.D' was largely composed of unemployed black men hired on in Savannah, Georgia and Jacksonville, Florida. Some (I never knew how many) were in drug rehabilitation programmes in Jacksonville, and a certain number of them may still have been using drugs. I was advised that mood swings and flash arguments over trivial things might be expected. Unlike the re-enactors, these extras had to be outfitted daily from the wardrobe and prop trucks; and trained from scratch in drill and marching. They also had to be supervised like regular workers, with attendance sheets, roll calls, and a degree of discipline.

Since I had experience as a counsellor, teacher or guide in various social and educational programmes I was not entirely new to managing groups of total strangers. I identified the objective for the group — the successful filming of each scene; let them know what I expected of

them in the way of obeying calls to keep quiet and behave like soldiers when the cameras were rolling; and told them that I didn't think any of them wanted to be part of 'screwing up a scene in the only film ever made about black men fighting for their freedom in the Civil War'. I told them that for my part, I would look out for their interests.

I explained why the re-enactor extras and the officers — who were providing all their own uniforms and equipment, and helping with supervision — were being paid more than the company extras' \$35 per day. I was unaware of the similarities between my own experiences and those of 'Colonel Shaw' until I saw the film almost a year later: watching it, I saw art imitate life.

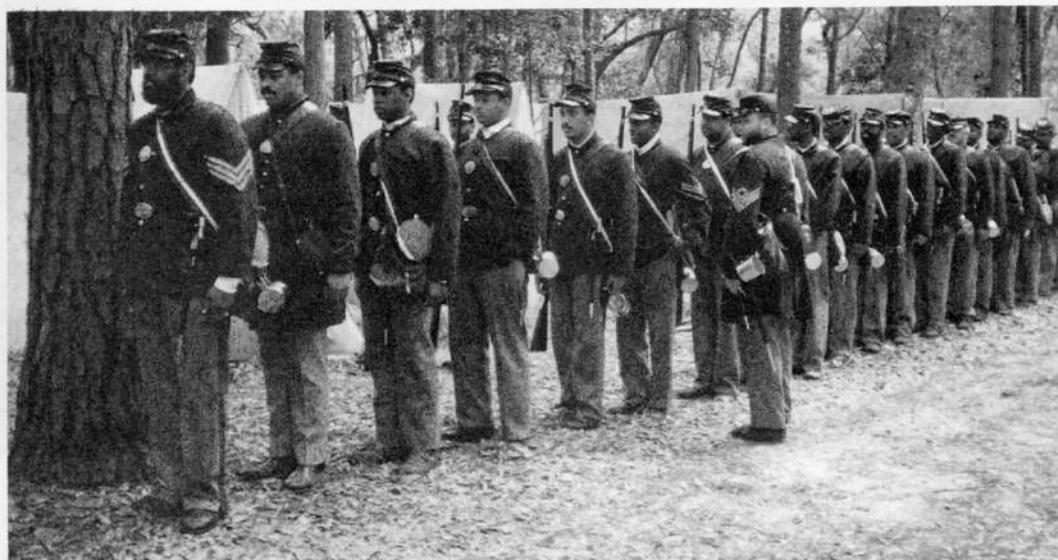
The general chaos of the scene in which Shaw meets his raw recruits mirrored the arrival of the black extras by bus at the beginning of the week. The re-enactors were disciplined and motivated; the 'civilian' extras were another matter. Each morning they had to be organised into their companies, and led through breakfast — initially, a distasteful repast of hot dogs and sweet rolls. Then they were taken to the prop trucks for the issue of arms and accoutrements. Though 'Co.D' did not have to wait for the 'Blue Suit', like the 54th Mass. in the film, we were issued equipment inferior to 'Co.A', which was continuously on camera and which included the main characters. Being 'deep background', our company

received fake cartridge boxes made of blocks of wood with leather flaps, and absurdly long painted canvas crossbelts which had to be pinned up each day. Weapons were Mississippi rifles instead of Enfields, though sometimes with rubber Enfield-type bayonets. 'Co.D', to their disappointment, were not taught to shoot the muskets. Canteens and cups were also non-functioning fakes, which led to problems.

## THE PROBLEMS OF COMMAND

While filming the final 'charge' scene on the beach a segregated situation developed. The regiment of white re-enactors, who very much wanted to be on camera, in fact had little to do in the scene; and many lounged around, bored and frustrated, during long periods of 'down' time. Meanwhile the black '54th Mass.' were doing take after take, often at a full run, and getting tired and thirsty. As luck would have it, the film company water and catering point was close to the white re-enactors' location, but 100 yards from the black troops who were doing the hard work. Every time 'cut' was called the black troops would start towards the water, only to be recalled by the cry of 'places' before they could reach it. My own canteen was the only functional one in the company, and did not go far when passed around. Dehydration was becoming a problem, and given the preoccupation of the film people with their main task, it was some time before water was finally delivered to the '54th' after repeated badgering by myself and the other officers. That we did so earned us some measure of credit with the extras, which I could not help recalling when watching the film sequence in which 'Col. Shaw' finally obtains shoes for his men.

The incident that really galvanised the whole '54th' as a unit came during the film-



1st Sgt. Bill Gwaltney and a 're-enactor' unit of the 54th Mass. — Co.B, from the Washington DC area.

ing of another beach scene. Dark clouds gathered and the wind picked up. Filming was postponed, and the white regiment was marched off to the waiting buses to be driven the two miles to the mess tents. By the time the '54th' was allowed to leave the beach it was raining; and we reached the road just in time

to see the only two buses provided to pick up all the re-enactors and extras driving off with the white re-enactors into a violent tropical rain-storm . . . Somebody had miscalculated; but by the time the black troops reached camp after a soaking two-mile march, some men in my company were displaying an

attitude reminiscent of the film character 'Trip', played by Denzel Washington. The film company seemed unaware of the effect on morale of this kind of careless mistake; while some individuals in the ranks picked up and exacerbated what they chose to regard as deliberate discrimination. Still, our walk in the

storm was another common experience which helped bond officers and extras as a group.

#### **Handling personalities**

My company even provided me with a 'Trip' of my own, a fellow named Robert. Issued with a sergeant's uniform by wardrobe before I arrived on set, he had taken on much of the character of 'Sgt. Mulcahy', and took to brow-beating the other extras although he had no real authority. He resented my arrival as 'officer', and was quick to inform me that since I could not possibly know how to them. When the inevitable



#### **Left:**

*Sunrise near the headquarters of the Army of Northern Virginia, Gettysburg, July 1988; cavalrymen tend to their mounts in the horse lines. (David Schiller)*

#### **Below:**

*The heat of the day on Cemetery Ridge — Union infantry resist a Confederate charge during the third day of the 1988 Gettysburg re-enactment. (David Schiller)*





1st Sgt. Mark Edwards and Capt. David Jurgella (right) with the 'civilian' extras of Co.D on the beach at Jekyll Island.

confrontation arose my more low-keyed approach to leadership was endorsed both by the film company and the men. I gave Robert a specific task to save his face, and he grudgingly co-operated. I heard after I had left the set he broke somebody's nose in another argument, so I believe I managed him reasonably well during my time with 'Co.D'.

I even had the invaluable help of a man like 'Rawlins', the Morgan Freeman character in the film. An older man who had been through the drug rehab programme, he had worked with some of the other men before coming to the film. He was a source of insight into the men's feelings and concerns, and suggested ways in which I could alleviate difficulties before insoluble problems arose.

The film's contrast between the well trained and disciplined 54th Mass., and the red-trousered 'contrabands' they encounter in South Carolina, was reflected on the set in relations between the black re-enactor companies and the units of 'civilian' extras like 'Co.D'. The re-enactors, who camped in military-style Civil War tents in the camp-ground areas reserved for them, did not seem to want any social contact with the 'civilian' extras, who were billeted in motels nearby. Most of the former were working professionals or college students, and at times I

sensed that they were embarrassed by the predominantly unemployed 'civilian' extras. Security was a problem with some of the latter, and a few Mississippi rifles did find their way to Savannah pawnshops. The attitude of some local white re-enactors did not help a difficult situation.

By the middle of the week, having lived through these situations, the men of 'Co.D' and I began to work together as a unit, and pride began to surface. The men asked to be taught the drill and tactics which were already familiar to the re-enactors. When time allowed I taught them the complete 'manual of arms', 'company into line', and 'marching by the flank'. I was joined by Sgt. Mark Edwards, a black re-enactor who helped me as my First Sergeant. At the end of the week, before heading out to the beach for the final night's filming, I thanked 'Co.D' for their efforts and told them I was proud to have been associated with the film, and with them. They responded with 'three cheers for the Captain', and marched over the boardwalk with feet stamping in time to a chant of 'Company D, Company D, . . .'

For most of these men their part in the filming may have been a highlight in their lives. For myself, I had the pride of knowing that after four years 'playing' an officer among re-enactors, I was able to lead men in a real situation. Though I went on to work for another two weeks at Jonesboro during the Antietam sequence, it was my week with 'Co.D' on Jekyll Island that I will always remember as my moment of *Glory*.

## Book Preview

It will not surprise anyone who has seen what American Civil War re-enactment groups can achieve to learn that the opportunity was taken to film second-unit material for *Glory* at the Gettysburg 125th anniversary event. Anyone who has never seen the extraordinary effects of which these groups are capable at major re-enactments will have his eyes opened by the remarkable photographs in a new book out at the end of the month:

*The American Civil War Recreated in Colour Photographs*, by Dr. David Th. Schiller.

David Schiller is best known as editor of the international gun magazine *Visier*, published in Stuttgart. But he is also keenly interested in the whole 'living history' movement; and took part in a number of the main Civil War events during the 125th anniversary series. His colour photographs cover a wide variety of subjects, from the huge camping grounds and the activity along 'sutler's row' to major battle re-enactments involving literally thousands of uniformed men, hundreds of horses, and scores of full-size working cannon. The book offers more than 100 colour photos, many striking individual studies contrasting with double page spreads capturing the excitement of major encounters. They are a fitting tribute to the patience and dedication of the 15,000 or so re-enactors who took part in the anniversary meetings.

Schiller's introductory text is also fascinating. We certainly had no idea that the first Civil War re-enactment

took place in 1903, and that the participants were actual veterans — 430 survivors of Mahone's Confederate brigade, who refought an episode of their own part in the 'battle of the Crater' at Petersburg 40 years before. Schiller also pays full tribute to the part unwittingly played in the birth of the modern hobby by the shooters of the North-South Skirmish Association; the statistics — and the photos — of their huge annual meetings are extraordinary to European eyes.

The high standards of accuracy in turn-out, and of disciplined behaviour, enforced by the organisers of the 125th anniversary series were described in an early issue of this magazine (see 'MP No.5, 'The Fourth Battle of Bull Run'); Schiller's photos fully bear out these enviable achievements. To us, however, the most attractive pictures are those which could only have been taken in America: the massed formations of re-enactors manoeuvring across the actual terrain of the War Between the States. No European group or association of groups could assemble anything approaching these numbers of uniformly costumed and equipped troops; and to see a misty morning photo of a regiment of 800 men in close formation drawn up in a cornfield is positively eerie. As David Schiller writes:

'More than once . . . the ultimate goal of re-enacting was reached: that fleeting moment when a level of authenticity is achieved which really does transport the participant back in time. At such moments, if only for a few seconds, I had a direct encounter with history . . . the door opened, and I stepped through it into that other time.'

MI

*The American Civil War Recreated in Colour Photographs*, by Dr. David Th. Schiller; published July 1990 by Windrow & Greene Ltd.; 96 pages, colour illustrations throughout; ISBN 1-872004-40-7; £12.95 (UK); available in the USA from Motorbooks International, PO Box 2, 729 Prospect Avenue, Osceola, WI 54020.

# Uniforms of the Boer Forces, 1899-1902 (2)

ERWIN A. SCHMIDL

Paintings by PETER DENNIS

In the first part of this article ('*MI*' No. 23) we described and illustrated the clothing and weapons of the 'commandos' who made up the bulk of the Boer forces. In this second part we deal with the regular forces of the Boer republics: the artillery and police units, as well as the medical service. In both republics there had been early attempts to establish regular and militia units, but after the Boer victories in the First Anglo-Boer War, 1880-81, a 'commando myth' ensured that the regular forces were kept small and understrength. Nonetheless, they greatly contributed to the Boers' successes in the Second Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902.

## THE TRANSVAAL STAATSARTILLERIE

This was the strongest and perhaps the best-known of the 'regular' forces. In the 1870s, among several volunteer corps established by reformist president Thomas F. Burgers (1834-1881) was the 'Batterie Dingaan'. It was commanded by Capt. Otto Riedl, a German, and consisted of four Krupp mountain guns. Plans for a regular artillery and gendarmerie force were foiled when the Transvaal was annexed by Britain in 1877.

When the country regained her independence in 1881, an artillery and a mounted police unit were established. These were amalgamated in 1882 under the name of *Transvaalse Artillerie-Korps* (also known as the '*Transvaalse Skutterkorps*', later known as the '*Rijdende Artillerie en Politie Corps*'. This force consisted of a *commandant* (lieutenant-colonel), two lieutenants, and 70 men, and was responsible for defending and policing the republic, supervising the building of roads, handling the natives, forming guards of honour, acting as escorts for the president and as servants for the Transvaal parliament, and rounding up runaway horses. Most of their guns were better-suited to equip a museum than a fighting force. Yet by 1885 they contemplated reducing this,

their only regular unit, to some 30-odd men!

The Jameson Raid of 1895-96 came as a great shock and, in 1896, the artillery corps was expanded to about 400 men. In 1897 Cmdt. S.P.E. Trichardt became commander of the Staatsartillerie, as the force



Left:

Two field telegraphists of the Transvaal artillery, posing with their heliograph in a Pretoria studio. Both wear the light-coloured field dress with sky blue facings and yellow buttons. Note the Austrian-style field caps, and the lack of the arm-of-service badge which signallers usually wore on their left upper sleeves. Black boots complete their outfit. (Transvaal Archives Depot, Pretoria)

Above:

Sgt. H. van der Merve of the veldtelegrafie, wearing the Dutch hussar-style uniform introduced in 1896. The sky blue piping and pointed cuffs were common to all members of the artillery, whereas the blue collar and shoulder straps denoted the signals section, as did the plain buttons and yellow arm badge. As a senior NCO, van der Merve wears an officer's-style stiff dark blue cap with sky blue piping. (Transvaal Archives Depot, Pretoria)

was now known. There were four 'riding' or field batteries<sup>(1)</sup> as well as a mountain artillery section<sup>(2)</sup>, and 22

Maxim-Nordenfeldt 'pom-pom' quick-firing guns (37mm) and about 30 Maxim machine guns<sup>(3)</sup>. To equip the newly-built forts around Pretoria and Johannesburg the artillery obtained four 155mm Creusot siege guns (known as 'Long Toms') and four 120mm Krupp howitzers which were organized into a fortress artillery section<sup>(4)</sup>. Both mounted and fortress artillery were commanded by a major.

The *Staatsartillerie* had about 50 modern guns (not counting the smaller calibre weapons) when war broke out in 1899. By 1899 the corps consisted of about 650 men, all ranks, and about 250 reservists. The small field telegraph section had two officers and 65 other ranks.

At the beginning of hostilities in 1899 the artillery was divided into three groups, the strongest joining the army invading Natal and the other two being sent to Mafeking and the Eastern border respectively<sup>(5)</sup>. Friend and foe alike praised the bravery of the gunners.

Two different types of uniform were worn. The 'Austrian' uniforms introduced around 1890 consisted of dark blue tunics with one row of six yellow buttons, two hip pockets, and sky blue facings, and sky blue Austrian-style caps for other ranks. For summer and field dress, sand-coloured (sometimes referred to as mouse-grey) uniforms of similar cut were worn, which were still in use by the time of the Second Anglo-Boer War. Officers wore dark blue patrol jackets, hussar style, with gold piping and black frogging. Badges of rank were Austrian six-pointed stars on the collar, in silver for officers and in white for

other ranks, although the latter were soon given gold chevrons worn on both lower arms. White tropical helmets were also worn, as were slouch hats for field dress.

In 1896 new 'black' (in reality, very dark blue) hussar-style dress uniforms of Dutch pattern were introduced. These had three rows of yellow buttons, black hussar-style frogging, black velvet collars, black twisted shoulder cords and sky blue pointed cuffs. In 1898 it was decided to adopt round dark blue cuffs instead, piped sky blue; by 1899 both versions were still in use. A suggestion to replace the black frogging colour with red (a more typical artillery colour) was never carried out.

Breeches (long *pantalon* trousers for the fortress artillery) were dark blue, piped sky blue, and worn with black hussar boots. There were dark blue greatcoats, piped sky blue<sup>(6)</sup>, and a simple white linen uniform for stable duty. Some photographs show a form of undress tunic, cut like the British khaki frock, worn by Transvaal gunners in the

field, with a low standing collar with gilt bursting-grenade insignia, and pleated breast pockets, presumably of dark blue.

For dress, a white helmet with eight-pointed star badge was worn, which could be fitted with a white plume for review order. In 1898-99 it was decided to replace the helmet, since it was impractical and 'too English,' and to adopt a black hussar-style busby instead, with white upright plume, red bag, and a badge of crossed cannons beneath a bursting grenade. This busby was considered not only cheaper than the helmet (lasting three years instead of one) but also — oddly enough — more practical and better suited to the South African conditions<sup>(7)</sup>.

A crossed cannon badge was worn on the black sabretache, surmounted by the letters 'SA' (*Staatsartillerie*). There was a black leather pouch bearing the yellow metal letters 'SA' or a cypher 'ZAR' which was worn on a black pouch belt across the shoulder.

The field telegraph section had sky blue collars and

shoulder straps, as well as plain buttons instead of the gunners' pattern with crossed cannon. Administrative personnel had red facings, while medics had black. Telegraphists, medics, musicians and administrative personnel had their respective badges on the left upper sleeves. NCOs' rank badges consisted of one to three gold chevrons on the forearms while *fouriers* had two gold chevrons on the upper arm. For undress and in the field the gunners retained their sky blue Austrian field caps with folding sides (cut like the German *Bergmütze* caps of later wars), with a 'ZAR' cockade of yellow metal and a black leather visor. Alternatively a slouch hat could be worn, with the right brim held up by an 'SA' badge. By 1899 this appears usually to have been replaced by an 'A', a small grenade badge or a simple button. Occasionally, blue puggarees with white polka-dots were worn.

The officers' frogged tunics were more elaborate than the men's, with black braiding and yellow buttons or black olives. Officers had gold piping along the black velvet collar, while staff officers had gold collars and gold braid on the cuffs. Both had gold twisted shoulder cords. Rank was denoted by one to three six-pointed silver stars on the collar, Austrian style (the *lieutenant-adjutant*, a rank between that of captain and first lieutenant, had one gold and one silver star). The highest rank was that of *commandant* (lieutenant-colonel), although Cmdt. Gen. Joubert wore a variation of this uniform, with four stars on the braided collar<sup>(8)</sup>.

For full dress officers wore black leather pouch belts with yellow-metal lion's head, chains and embossed yellow 'studs'. Officers' sabretaches had an eagle badge above the crossed cannon. Officers and higher-ranking NCOs had stiff black caps (blue for NCOs) in addition to helmet or busby, again following the Austrian model. *Adjutant-onder-officieren* (warrant officers) wore officers'



Note this gunner's black pouch belt with 'ZAR' cypher, sword and sabretache. The busby dates this photograph to the immediate pre-war period, as do the round cuffs introduced in 1898. Gunners wore black velvet collars and black twisted shoulder cords. Note sky blue piping of tunic and breeches, and hussar-style black boots. (Courtesy SADF Archives, Pretoria)



uniforms, but with a button on the collar instead of the officers' silver stars and with three buttons on the pointed cuffs.

As early as 1895 Capt. P. Erasmus had suggested that officers should be allowed to wear light-coloured field uniforms which they were willing to obtain at their own expense, as the dark blue patrol jackets were unsuited to the African climate<sup>(9)</sup>. Khaki field uniforms with black piping and stars on the collar were introduced before the war; surviving examples confirm several variations. Possibly similar uniforms would have been given to other ranks as well, but by the outbreak of war in 1899 they still wore the old Austrian-style field uniforms.

Gunners and officers alike wore sabres, sometimes even in the field, although carbines and revolvers were the weapons normally used. Several

types of bandolier existed.

Photographs show that a great variety of uniforms and combinations were worn in the field, including civilian dress. The stock of uniforms appears to have been quickly exhausted, as a number of additional men were enrolled in late 1899. Often uniform jackets (either the sand-coloured field type or the dark blue dress ones) were worn with civilian trousers and a variety of footwear. The caps were usually replaced by slouch hats. When the Boers switched to guerrilla warfare in late 1900 they lost or destroyed most of their guns, and the gunners, together with the remaining policemen, became mounted infantry.

#### THE ORANGE FREE STATE ARTILLERY CORPS

The Free State artillery dated back to 1857, but it was only

in 1880, when former German NCO Friedrich W.R. Albrecht (1848-1926) was seconded to this unit with the rank of captain, that the gunners began to outnumber the band. Still, the corps was smaller than the Transvaal one: in 1899 it had five officers and 159 other ranks; including the reservists the total strength was some 400 men. Apart from some odd pieces and five Armstrong 9-pdr. (78.5mm) field guns, the Free Staters had 14 L/27 Krupp 75mm field guns, which were slightly outdated by 1899. They still used black powder charges, which made concealment very difficult. There were also three machine guns and one 37mm pom-pom. As in the Transvaal, there was a signals and telegraph section as well as a band.

During the war Albrecht, by then a major, gained a remarkable reputation for

*A mixed battery of the Transvaal Staatsartillerie photographed during the first days of the war. From right to left are: three Maxim machine guns (one without water jacket); four 'pom-poms' (with shields); a 75mm Creusot quick-firing gun; and what appears to be an old howitzer. Despite the poor quality of the picture, various orders of dress can be identified. Of the officers standing in the centre of the picture, one wears the greatcoat, while the man to his left wears the officers' khaki field uniform. Some of the gunners wear uniforms, while a number are in 'civvies'. (South African National Museum of Military History, Johannesburg)*

#### Left:

*This interesting photograph, taken near Ladysmith in early 1900, shows the crew of a 120mm Krupp howitzer. Four of the gunners wear the Transvaal Staatsartillerie's light-coloured 'Austrian' field dress while two appear to wear either civilian or dark blue uniform trousers. Note the big pouch worn on the belt of the man on the left. The man next to him, in civilian clothes, has his hat brim fixed by a small grenade badge, while the gunner sitting in front of him has a brass letter 'A' instead. The two men sitting in front wear civilian clothes — note the different footwear: the man in the centre has leather gaiters, while his pipe-smoking friend has tucked his trousers into his socks. (Trimmel Collection)*

himself and for his men. The main body of the Free State artillery served with Gen. Cronje's army at Kimberley and Magersfontein and had to surrender at Paardeberg in February 1900; but individual guns continued to serve with the commandos, some of the gunners staying in the field throughout the war.

Earlier uniforms had followed British patterns, but Maj. Albrecht introduced Prussian uniforms made in Berlin which closely followed the Prussian artillery uniforms and included the *Pickelhaube* with ball finial. Tunics were dark blue with

eight yellow buttons and black facings with orange (instead of the German red) piping, and two orange *Litzen* on collar and cuffs. Shoulder straps were orange with yellow grenades. In review order the helmet was worn with an orange and white plume. For undress, the gunners had a German-type dark blue cap with orange piping, black leather visor, and a badge of the Free State coat of arms.

**Below centre:**

Nobody should claim that all Boers had a penchant for simple and practical uniforms! Capt. du Toit of the Transvaal artillery in full dress, including the busby introduced in 1899, but still with the pre-1898 sky blue pointed cuffs. Note black pouch belt with studs and chains, and gold braiding on tunic and trousers. (SADF Archives, Pretoria)

**Below:**

Two officers of the Transvaal Staatsartillerie in the late 1890s. The second lieutenant (left) wears regulation stiff cap and patrol jacket-type tunic with black velvet collar and gold shoulder cords; note the single six-pointed gold stars of his rank. The first lieutenant on the right wear a non-regulation uniform, including a blue sidecap with coat-of-arms badge, and a jacket, probably dark blue, with black collar (note grenade badge) and twisted shoulder cords. (Africana Museum, Johannesburg)

Corporals appear to have worn one chevron on the upper right sleeve, while sergeants had gold braid around collar and cuffs, and sergeant-majors had in addition a coat-of-arms badge on each side of the collar. Officers had similar tunics with epaulettes for full dress, and hussar-style braided jackets of a slightly lighter blue for undress. Officers' rank insignia were German-style shoulder boards. Trousers were black, piped orange along the seams. For parade dress officers had silver sashes and shoulder belts, following the Prussian pattern. Gunners wore white waist belts, and white pouch belts across the left shoulder. All ranks had German sabres, with orange swordstraps (officers had silver).

In the field a khaki-grey uniform was worn, piped black, with black collar and apparently orange shoulder straps piped black. Although a corresponding field cap

existed, modelled on the German *Tellerkappe*, most gunners wore slouch hats in the field, complete with the usual brass coat-of-arms badges (inside a laurel wreath for officers) and, according to some sources, orange puggarees. Officers wore simple khaki civilian jackets in the field, with no insignia except shoulder straps in some cases — up to 1899 officers were expected to wear their blue undress tunics as patrol jackets in the field<sup>(10)</sup>. Otto von Lossberg, a German-American volunteer officer, recounted that in his khaki jacket he was once mistaken for a British officer and drew fire from a group of trigger-happy Boers — who missed. Unlike the Transvaal artillery, the Free Staters appear not to have worn their blue uniforms in the field; only the dark blue greatcoats were occasionally worn<sup>(11)</sup>.

As the Free State commissariat had failed to provide adequate stores, the gunners were issued with civilian clothes from late 1899 on, although these proved more expensive and less durable than the khaki uniforms. Otto von Lossberg recalled that in their mixed clothing, their red and white blankets and jauntily coloured suitcases tied to wagons and limbers, the gunners resembled a circus troupe rather

than a military unit.

Officers appear to have taken their sabres into the field, even if they did not actually carry them at all times. When Lt. Andersen was taken prisoner by the British in late 1900 he was asked whether he had ever used his sabre in the field. He answered: 'Yes, three times, on the backs of some reluctant burghers!'<sup>(12)</sup>

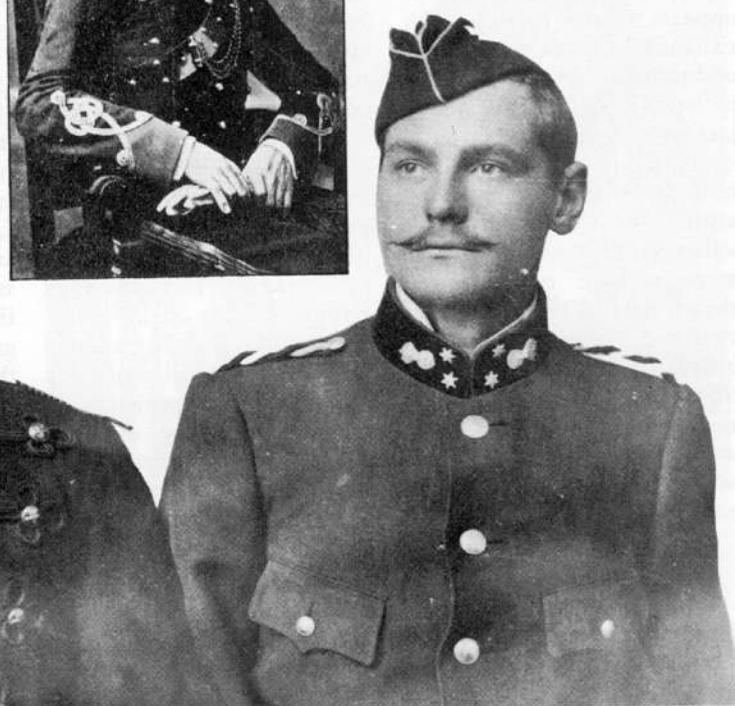
In addition to the guns listed above, according to contemporary British intelligence reports the Boers captured no less than 48 British pieces, among them 26 15-pdr. BL, 11 12-pdr. BL and seven 2½in. RML mountain guns, and seven Vickers Maxim 37mm pom-poms<sup>(13)</sup>. Most of these were manned by gunners from the two artillery services.

## THE POLICE UNITS

### The Transvaal Police

Commonly known as the 'ZARPs', from the abbreviation for *Zuid Afrikaanse Rijdende Politie* (S.A. Mounted Police), this unit had emerged in 1896 from the common artillery and police force already mentioned. Headed by *Kommissaris* Daniel E. Schutte (1854-1911), there were 1,545 all ranks, of whom some 800 served in Johannesburg and 310 in Swaziland (a Transvaal protectorate at the time). There were mounted and foot sections; some 200 black African auxiliary policemen serving on foot are not included in the above numbers, as they did not serve in the war. In October 1899, 400 (mainly unmarried) policemen from Johannesburg were called up for service in the field under Maj. Gerard M.J. van Dam (1855-1940). These saw action on the Natal front and later in the Transvaal, gaining fame for their stand at the battle of Belfast in August 1900, where they suffered heavy losses. The Swaziland Mounted Police fought attached to the Swaziland commando<sup>(14)</sup>.

The police had very dark blue uniforms with yellow buttons. The small caps (with brass 'ZAR' cypher in front)





could be exchanged for white tropical helmets for parades. In the field the dress jackets were rarely worn, but photographs show policemen wearing a simple dark blue undress jacket, braided black, with hook-and-eye fastening. Usually policemen wore the brass letters 'ZAR' on the right side of their collars (on the left side there was space for the policeman's number). NCOs had white chevrons on their right upper arms (two chevrons for corporals, three for sergeants, and four for sergeant-majors).

Officers wore similar uniforms, with Austrian-style rank badges on the collar, as in the artillery. In the field most policemen wore civilian clothes of sand or khaki colour. In peacetime the policemen were equipped with sword, baton, and revolver. When they took to the field they received Mauser rifles instead of their old Mar-

*The Prussian influence on the uniforms of the Free State artillery is clearly shown in this photograph, with the dark blue full dress uniform in contrast to the khaki field uniform. The cap worn by the gunner on the right appears to be the blue type, with black band and orange piping, although a khaki version existed as well. Surviving examples of the blue cap have coat-of-arms badges instead of the orange-white-orange cockade shown here, which was usually worn on the khaki caps only. Note the white belts, and the curious short sword worn by the soldier in field dress. (A.B. Walmsley Collection)*

tini-Henrys and left the sabres at home. As usual, ammunition was carried in bandoliers.

#### **The Johannesburg Special Police**

At the outbreak of war most goldmines in the Witwatersrand area had to close down while a number of policemen were called up for military service. To prevent the now jobless foreigners from joining the Boer forces, and at the

#### **Captions to colour plates overleaf:**

(1) A corporal of the Transvaal Staatsartillerie in the 1890s regulation field uniform; the blue cap and khaki tunic still show Austrian influence. A tunic in the Welch Regiment Museum in Cardiff is of sand-coloured corduroy cloth, although photos suggest that some were of khaki drill. Note characteristic reinforcement of the breeches. Other ranks had a pressed metal cap cockade, with 'ZAR' stamped through, showing black. NCO's gold chevrons were worn on both lower arms. The bandolier shown was regulation issue; all gunners were armed with Mauser rifles.

(2) This second lieutenant wears the Staatsartillerie officers' khaki field dress introduced shortly before the war. The black piping of the collar, shoulder cords and Austrian knot cuff design is as on the blue dress uniform. There were several variations — note the flat, blank metal buttons on this example, based on a jacket worn by Lt. du Toit which is now in the Africana Museum, Johannesburg. The Austrian-pattern stiff officers' cap shown was rarely worn in the field, being replaced by a slouch hat worn by all ranks. Officers had elaborate hat cockades in gold thread, with 'ZAR' in gold in the black centre. Note wooden holster which doubled as a stock for the Mauser, the binocular case, and the buttoned gaiters. The very dark grey overcoat had two rows of gilt buttons and a black velvet collar piped light blue; the small sky blue paroli collar patches followed the Austrian pattern. Sky blue piping ran down the front and around the cuffs and pocket flaps. To his right is the coat-of-arms of the Transvaal.

(3) This Staatsartillerie warrant officer wears a typical combination of slouch hat, blue dress tunic, cord breeches and boots. Warrant officers wore officers' tunics, but with a plain button on the collar instead of the stars and with three buttons on the pointed cuffs of the 1896 uniforms. It is unclear how this changed when the round cuffs were introduced in 1898. Note that this senior NCO is fully equipped with Mauser carbine, revolver, ammunition bandolier and revolver ammunition pouch. (From a photo taken in 1899.)

(4) A Transvaal gunner, showing details of the dark blue, almost black braided hussar-style dress tunic. Copied from a surviving example in the Bloemfontein War Museum of the Boer Republics, this tunic must have belonged to a signaller, as shown by the plain blue collar and shoulder straps — instead of the gunners' black velvet collar and twisted shoulder cords — although it lacks the signaller's arm badge. The simple pouch, from the same source, may be a signaller's item since the gunners' version was

more elaborate. The hat with the single letter 'A' is from a photo of 1899; pre-war photos show an 'SA' badge.

(5) A variation of the officers' field uniform made from khaki corduroy, with no braid but with the gunners' dress buttons. There are six large buttons down the front, with smaller buttons for the shoulder straps and pocket flaps. The three small stars denote a captain. (From Capt. Kroon's jacket in the Fort Klapperkop military museum, Pretoria.)

(6) An Orange Free State gunner in field uniform. The hat followed the Prussian pattern; in the khaki field dress version the coat-of-arms badge was replaced by the pressed metal cockade worn by (8). The simple khaki field jacket is piped black with (probably) orange shoulder straps piped black. The combination of khaki jacket and black trousers piped orange is confirmed by photos, although khaki trousers piped black also existed.

(7) A Transvaal police sergeant wearing the typical dark blue undress jacket, braided black, with the white chevrons of his rank on the right sleeve only. Note flat blue cap with the interwoven 'ZAR' badge, these letters also worn on the right collar. The policeman's individual number could be worn on the left collar but photos confirm that this was not always done. (From photos and actual examples in the Police Museum, Pretoria and the Vryheid Local Museum in Natal.)

(8) Lt. Andersen of the Orange Free State artillery, from a photo taken in Pretoria in May 1900. Officers of the OFS artillery had no proper field uniform and were expected to wear blue patrol jackets, British fashion. In 1899 they adopted various forms of civilian khaki jacket, usually worn without insignia. Lt. Andersen always wore a small ribbon in the state colours on his jacket, and had shoulder boards with the pips of his rank added as well, although this was probably an exception rather than the rule. Above his head is the coat-of-arms of the Orange Free State.

(9) This ambulance medic wears a 'tropicalized' German Red Cross uniform in khaki. Note typical brassard; a Red Cross badge was worn on both slouch hat and white-topped peaked cap. Also visible, on the cap band and turned-up brim of the slouch hat, are the black-white-red German cockades.

(10) This nurse from a Dutch ambulance wears the dress which, with slight variations, was worn by nurses from all the international ambulances. It did not differ much from outfits worn by British nurses. (From a photo showing De Hollandsche Ambulans in Heidelberg, Transvaal, in early 1900.)

continued on page 28

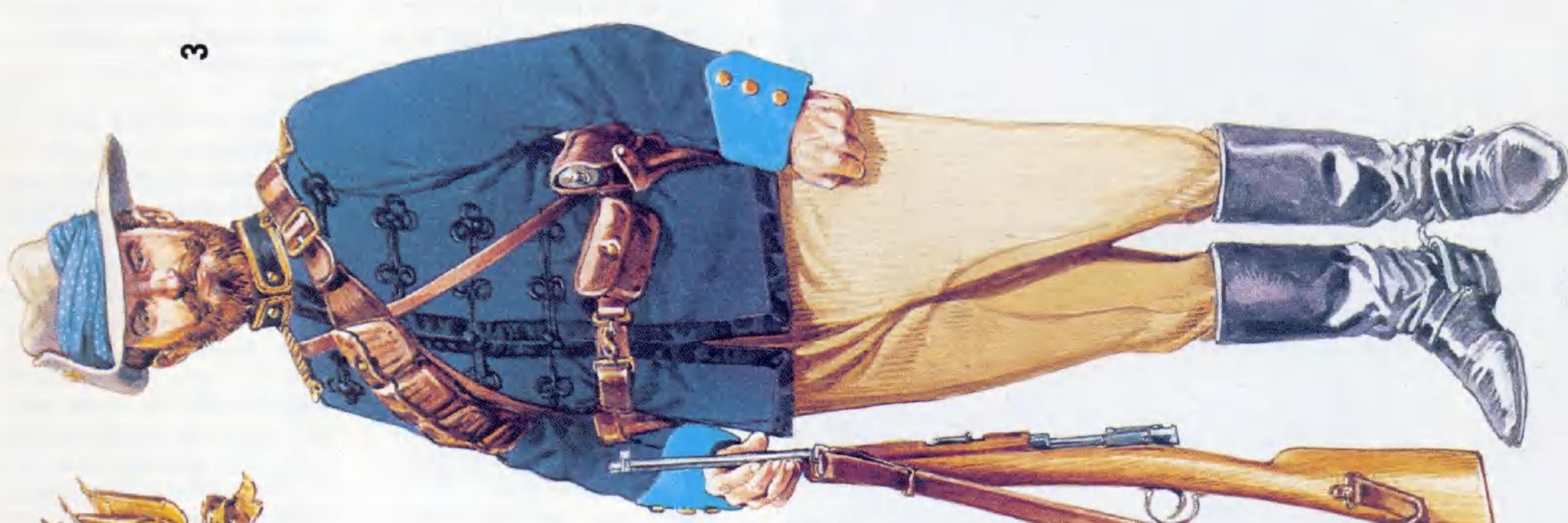
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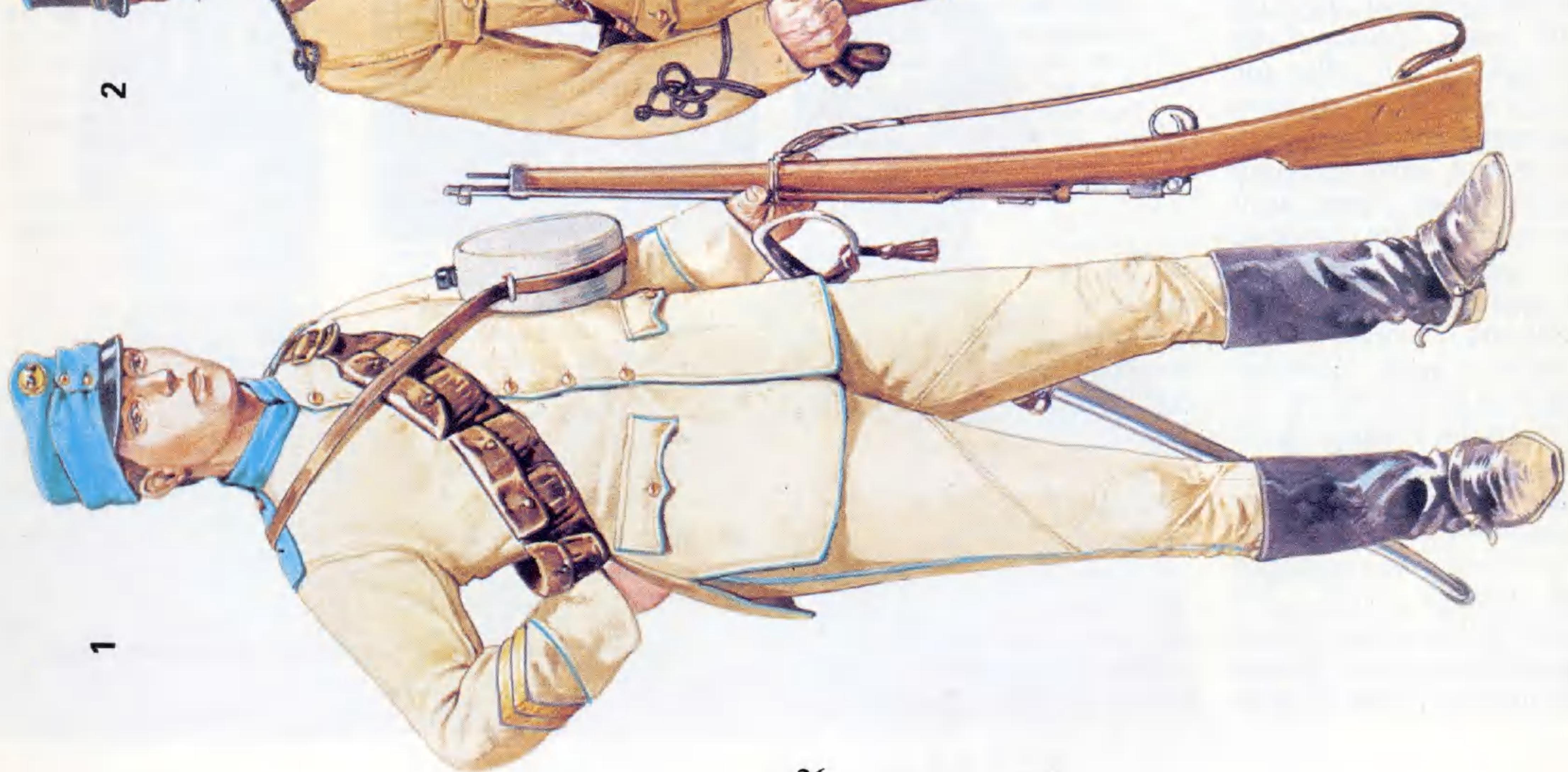
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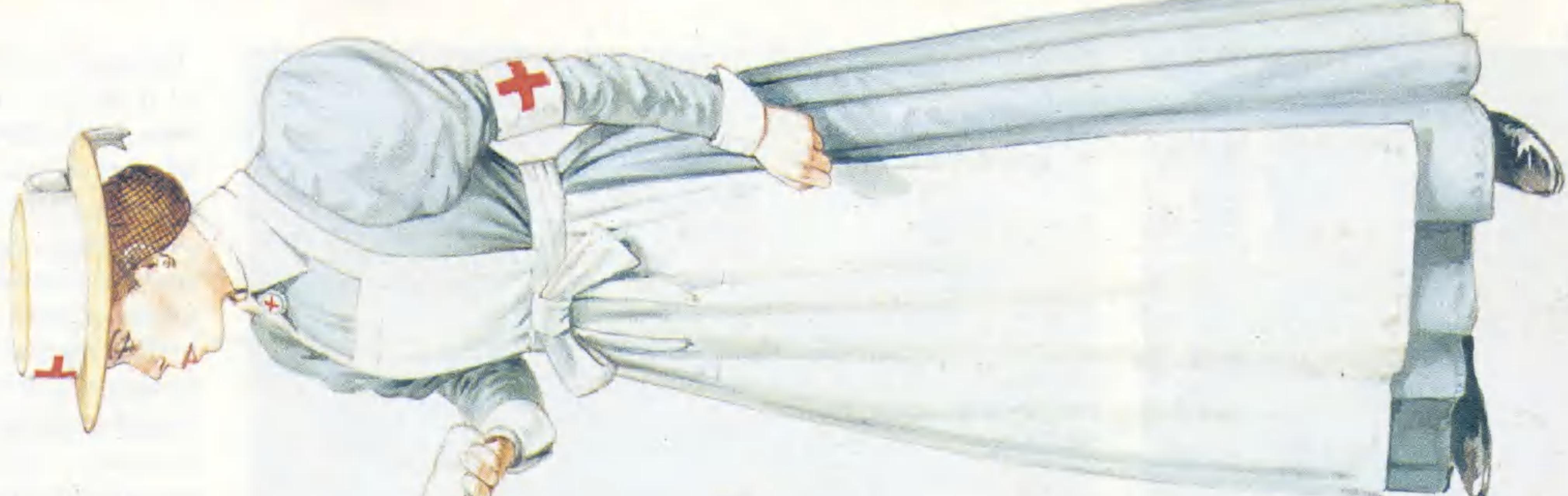
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**Above:**  
A 'ZARP' standing in front of President Kruger's house in Pretoria. While the white helmets with spike, badge and chain were strictly ceremonial items, the simple dark blue jackets shown here were also worn in the field by Transvaal policemen. Just visible are the black braid on the jacket front and cuffs, and the letters 'ZAR' on the right collar. (Africana Museum, Johannesburg)

**Above|right:**  
Gunner and officer of the Free State artillery in the field, early 1900. The man on the left wears the khaki field uniform piped black, albeit with a rather curious narrow-brimmed hat sporting the coat-of-arms badge. On the right Lt. Andersen wears a typical civilian khaki jacket. On the hat he wears his officer's coat-of-arms badge (with laurel wreath), and on his left breast a small ribbon in the colours of the Free State. Note his dark buttoned gaiters and his sword. (A.B. Walmsley Collection)



same time to protect the mines, the mine administrators, in co-operation with the European consuls, raised a special police unit. This was not to be used in the field and, being funded by the mine companies, fell outside the control of the Boer government. The special police were loosely organised on 'national' lines, with French, Austrian and other sub-units.

They wore 'yellow-brown' (khaki) uniforms, presumably of British pattern, and slouch hats with one side pinned up; and were armed with revolvers or carbines. This special police continued to exist until mid-1900, when it was disbanded shortly after the British occupation of Johannesburg<sup>(15)</sup>.

#### The Free State Police

The Free State's police force was very small; until 1896 the artillery had been responsible for patrolling the borders. In 1899 there were 81 men in the *Rijdende Dienst* (mounted service), a type of rural police. In addition, there were 69 'ordinary' police, 41 of whom served on foot, and a number of black African auxiliaries.

Uniforms consisted of a

dark blue jacket (with coat-of-arms badge on both collars), light khaki cord breeches, leggings and slouch hat. Khaki jackets and most probably civilian clothes were worn in the field. Like the gunners, the Free State policemen might have worn orange puggarees on their slouch hats. Weapons were revolvers and carbines, ammunition being carried in bandoliers<sup>(16)</sup>.

#### \* \* \* Theron's Cyclists and Scouts

Although not regular units in the traditional sense, at least passing mention must be made of two special units. Shortly before the war, Capt. Daniel J.S. Theron (1872-1900) raised a cyclist corps in the Transvaal, called the *Wielrijders Rapportgangers Corps*, some 100 men strong. Despite the burghers' scepticism this unit performed sterling service, gathering intelligence, carrying despatches and patrolling the Swaziland border. Punctures were prevented by placing a strip of untanned leather between the tube and tyre.

In March 1900 Theron was ordered to raise a second unit,

Theron's Verkenningskorps (T.V.K., or 'Theron's Scouts'), which was unique in that it was sponsored by both republics. Both units saw action together, but were dissolved soon after Theron's death in September 1900.

The cyclists wore civilian sports clothes, usually breeches or knickerbocker trousers with shoes and woollen stockings, and sometimes pullovers instead of jackets. They were armed with revolvers and, if necessary, carbines. Theron's Scouts rode horses and thus wore ordinary Boer dress; possibly with the addition of blue, polka-dotted puggarees on their slouch hats<sup>(17)</sup>.

#### Ambulances and Red Cross Personnel

The medical services of the Boer republics were understaffed and of little real value. There were no real uniforms; medics at some stages wore a white bone 'button', with a red cross painted thereon, on the right lapel of their jackets in addition to the usual white brassard with the red cross on the left upper arm. Those holding executive posts wore a star badge on the left lapel, while doctors wore two such stars. Nurses wore the usual dress, often with the addition of the Boer women's characteristic white *kappies* (bonnets). A German nurse observed that these bonnets, while befitting pretty young girls, turned older women into ugly monsters<sup>(18)</sup>.

More effective were the nine foreign ambulances, mostly financed by overseas Red Cross societies. The staff members of these establishments usually wore their national Red Cross uniforms, sometimes with modifications to adapt them to the South African climate. Doctors acting as medical officers likewise wore a mixture of national uniforms and tropical dress.

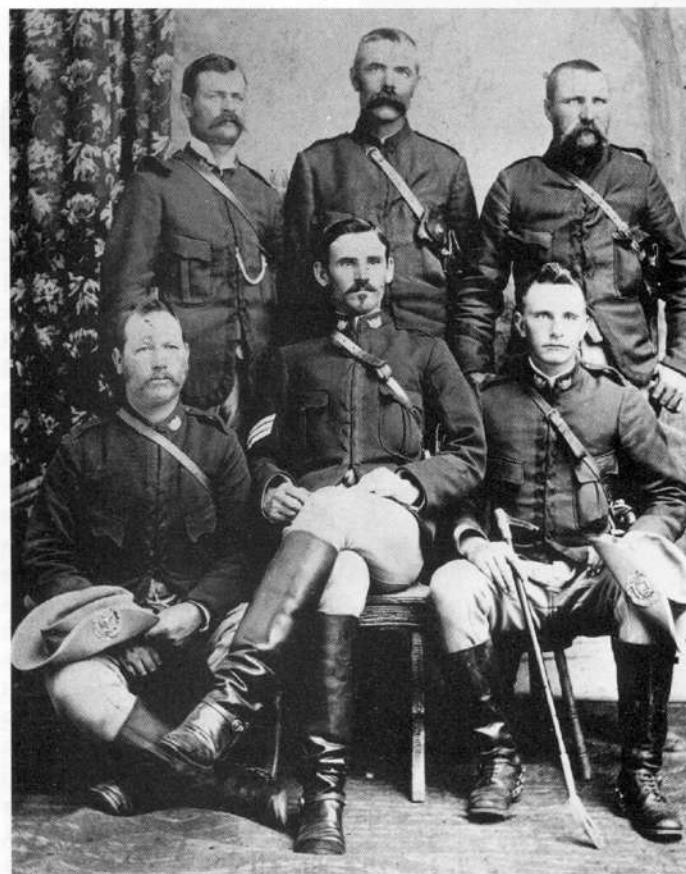
The German Red Cross personnel, for example, wore khaki colonial uniforms modelled on the slate-grey German Red Cross uniforms for the hot season and cord uniforms for the winter months, complete with a

visoried cap or a slouch hat, adorned with a red cross at the front and the German red-white-black cockade on the turned-up right brim. For self defence the doctors were issued with Mauser pistols. Two German doctors who wore khaki uniforms found themselves more than once the target of trigger-happy Boers<sup>(19)</sup>.

Prominently displayed on uniforms as well as ambulance wagons, tents and trains was the red cross, usually on a white background. Later in the war, however, some British-supplied red cross flags and brassards of khaki material were used as well. At first foreign ambulances were often marked with several flags: the red cross flag, the Transvaal *Vierkleur*, and the respective national flag — red-white-black in the case of the Germans. Many doctors saw the Anglo-Boer War as a 'test' in order to evaluate the working of the Geneva Convention in times of war. Generally speaking, the Boers respected the red cross more than the British. **[1]**

#### Notes:

- (1) 1st Bty. (Capt. Wolmarans): six Schneider-Creusot L/30 75mm field guns; 2nd Bty. (Capt. van der Merve): four Krupp L/24 75mm field guns; 3rd Bty. (Lt. Pretorius): four Krupp L/24 75mm field guns; 4th Bty. four Maxim-Nordenfeldt 75mm field guns.
- (2) Probably four 37mm Krupp L/30 and four 65mm Krupp mountain guns.
- (3) At least 12 for .303 Lee-Metford rifle ammunition and ten or 12 for the .450 (11.4mm) Martini-Henry.
- (4) Of the four forts at Pretoria, Forts Klapperkop and Skanskop have been restored and house interesting exhibitions on South African military history. The fortress artillery served in the field in the 1899 war; the forts themselves were not defended and surrendered to the British forces in 1900.
- (5) See Daniel Johannes Haupt, *Die Staatsartillerie van die Suid-Afrikaanse Republiek*, unpubl. M.A.thesis, University of Pretoria 1946; also O.J.O. Ferreira (ed.), *Geschiedenis, Werken en Streven van S.P.E. Trichard* (Pretoria: HSRC, 1975), 83f. To arrive at the given numbers, the varying data given for the Boer guns even in the original sources were checked with the 'Records of Boer Artillery' compiled by British intelligence in July 1902 (Public Records Office: WO 32/8111).
- (6) For a detailed description of the overcoat, see J.R. Williams' excellent article: 'South African Republic: First



Above:

This picture of Lt. P.L. de Hart of the Pretoria police force shows some of the differences between police and artillery uniforms which developed when the two services became separated in the 1890s. Note the comparatively plain appearance due to the lack of gold braid and shoulder cords. (Transvaal Archives Depot, Pretoria)

Above left:

A group of Free State policemen showing the dark blue jackets worn by the Rijende Dienstmag; note black braid and large breast pockets. Coat-of-arms badges on hats and collars appear to have been worn as a distinctive sign rather than as badges of rank. Sgt. Hartman (centre front) wears the chevrons of his rank. Other photographs show that a sidecap could be worn instead of the hat. Note the revolver holsters and — barely visible beneath the jackets of at least two men — the waistcoats which at that time were often worn beneath uniform jackets, even by British soldiers. (A.B. Walmsley Collection)

#### Acknowledgements:

As in the first article, thanks are due to the staffs of the various archives, libraries and museums in South Africa, Britain, and Austria where I collected data on Boer uniforms. Special thanks are due to Miss Fiona M. Barbour of the McGregor Museum in Kimberley, to Sgt. Andy May (Pretoria), to Hamish Paterson of the Military Museum in Johannesburg, to Prof. J.H.G. de Villiers of Grahamstown, and — last but not least — to Mr. A.B. Walmsley for having let me use his documentation.

# The First Contingent, Canadian Expeditionary Force, 1914 (1)

JACK L. SUMMERS

On 4 August 1914 Britain declared war on Germany, taking Canada into the war with her. In response to Canada's offer of support, the dispatch of an infantry division was suggested and Parliament quickly authorized the raising of an expeditionary force of 25,000 men.

In 1914 Canada was a self-governing dominion of some eight million people, with a defence force of 75,000 volunteer militiamen, and 3,000 regulars whose primary rôle was training the part-time militia. Beginning in 1900, steps were taken to modernize the militia. Medical, ordnance, intelligence, and supply departments were created to give some balance to the force, and the Canadian production of a military rifle and leather equipment was undertaken to ensure a reliable supply. While these efforts produced sufficient modern arms and equipment for the all-too-abbreviated training of the militia, there was an acute shortage of all types of the mobilization stores required for raising a major expeditionary force.

Before examining the mobilization of the contingent, some mention must be made of the colourful and controversial Minister of Militia and Defence, for mobilization was a one-man show and that man was Sam Hughes. Hughes was appointed minister in 1911 — with some misgivings — by Prime Minister Robert Borden.

## Right:

The 48th Highlanders of Canada, Toronto, soon to raise the 15th Canadian Inf. Bn., at summer camp in July 1914. The men wear Web Equipment, 1908 (Canadian) Pattern and carry the Ross Mk.II rifle. The drab service dress doublet is similar to the British pattern. The Glengarry with diced band was worn during the mobilization period but was replaced with the drab tam-o'-shanter bonnet about the time of the Second Battle of Ypres. (48th Highlanders of Canada Museum)

completely dominated Canadian military activity<sup>(1)</sup>.

## MOBILIZATION

When the Canadian Expeditionary Force was authorized on 6 August 1914, Hughes ignored the existing mobilization plan which had been drawn up in 1911, and sent 226 telegrams directly to unit commanders asking them to submit lists of available recruits to militia headquarters in Ottawa. These lists would be reviewed and recruits selected by the headquarters staff! The result of the minister's personal recruiting programme was instant chaos. Nobody between Hughes and the unit commander had the slightest idea of what was happening. Even Hughes recognized the impracticality of his scheme, and in a few days reverted to the original mobilization plan, but not without continual direct intervention which only compounded the confusion.

The artillery, with its customary detachment from the common soldiery, ignored the minister's telegrams and



Infantryman of the Canadian Militia at summer camp c. 1907. He wears cotton shirt and trousers and a modified light order of equipment consisting of Oliver waist belt, ammunition pouch, haversack, and water bottle. This soldier carries the Mk.I Lee Enfield rifle, which was gradually replaced by the Ross. (48th Highlanders of Canada Museum)



was assembled by the Director of Artillery according to the original pre-war instructions. The gunners arrived at the concentration site complete with guns, waggons, and horses.

The minister's dramatic call to arms designated Camp Valcartier, 16 miles northwest of Quebec City, as the assembly area for the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF). In less than a month this tract of sandy woodland was transformed into an organized camp accommodating 35,000 men. The prodigious feat required the provision of water, sewers, lights, telephone service, railway sidings, permanent ordnance buildings, and tent lines. The 1,500 targets of the rifle range stretched for 2½ miles.

With great energy and dedication, Hughes drove the work through to completion in only three weeks. He revelled in the task; and constructed a personal residence on the site from which he sallied forth to inspect the troops, urge on the contractors, and dabble in the details of the organization and training of the assembling host.

The construction of Valcartier was vintage Hughes: it was full of driving energy, unbelievable industry, achievement on a dramatic scale—and totally unnecessary.<sup>(2)</sup>

### **1st DIVISION ORDER OF BATTLE**

The first train-load of volunteers rolled into Valcartier on 18 August; three weeks later there were 32,665 men in camp.

The infantry was formed into provisional battalions of eight companies, each of three officers and 116 other ranks, and a reinforcement increment of ten per cent. Battalions were numbered consecutively rather than bearing titles of long-established militia regiments, and, in most cases, represented specific geographic regions of the country.

The battalions were grouped into four provisional brigades, each of four battalions. Gradually, an infantry

division began to take shape which, by the end of September, consisted of: 1st Bde.: 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Bns. (all of Ontario); 2nd Bde.: 5th (Saskatchewan) 6th and 8th (Manitoba), and 7th (BC) Bns.; 3rd Bde.: 13th (Montreal), 15th (Toronto) and 16th (mixed) Highland Bns., and 14th (Montreal) Bn.; 4th Bde.: 9th, 10th, 11th (all Prairies) and 12th (Maritime) Battalions.

Several battalions were raised from single militia regiments, and retained a close association with their parent units. The 13th Bn., recruited from the 5th Regiment, Royal Highlanders of Canada, of Montreal, was designated 13th Bn. (Royal Highlanders of Canada). Similarly the 15th Bn., raised from the 48th Highlanders of Canada, Toronto, was titled 15th Bn. (48th Highlanders of Canada).

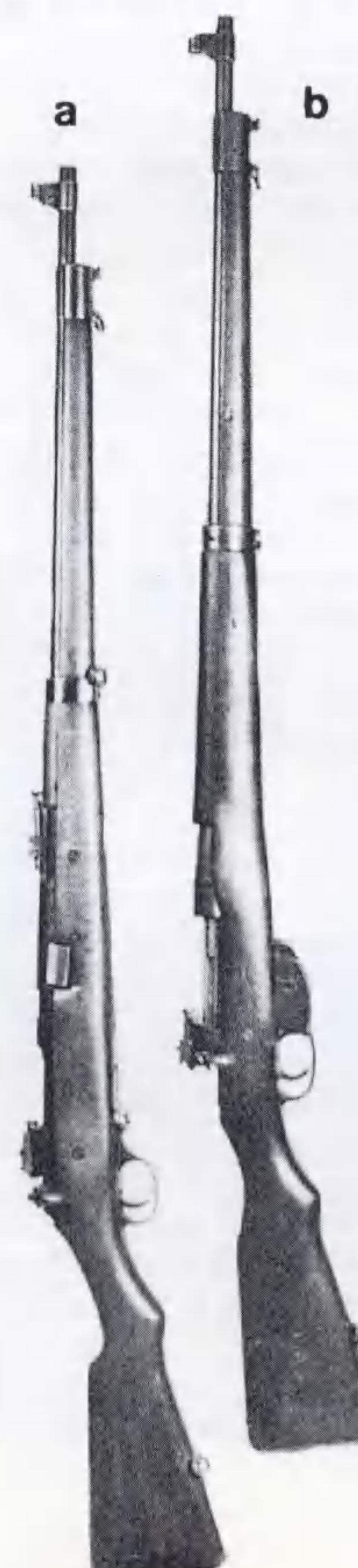
The 16th Bn. (Canadian Scottish) was a composite kilted battalion made up from detachments of the 50th Gor-



A



B



**(A)** Set of universal 'CANADA' badges, standard issue in the First Contingent, CEF, but later gradually replaced by distinctive battalion badges designed and paid for by individual units. Shown here are the large maple leaf cap badge, smaller maple leaf collar badges, and the solid metal bar shoulder badge.

**(B)** Collar badges of unique Canadian design, bearing the number of the battalion, were issued just before 1st Canadian Div. left for France, although not all units wore these new badges at first. (University of Saskatchewan Photographic Services)

**Left:**  
A private of infantry in Canadian service dress smartly turned out in walking-out order, with stick and sidearm. After some initial training, the troops are beginning to look like soldiers. (Glenbow Archives, Calgary)

**Centre:**  
(a) The Ross Mk.II rifle, and (b) the Mk.III carried by 1st Canadian Div. into the Second Battle of Ypres. This controversial weapon was heavy, long, and mechanically unreliable under service conditions. (Museum Restoration Services, Bloomfield)



A junior officer with a US Colt .45 automatic pistol, with belt and holster. The pistol was issued to many officers and pistol-armed other ranks of the First Canadian Contingent because of a shortage of British Webleys.

Above right:  
Canadian-pattern drab service dress jacket with fixed drab shoulder straps adopted in late 1914 to simplify production. (Jacket and photo: Glenbow Museum)

don Highlanders of Victoria, 73rd Seaforth Highlanders of Vancouver, 79th Cameron Highlanders of Winnipeg, and the 91st Argylls of Hamilton. By whatever mysterious means Highlanders use for solving such problems, the 16th Bn. selected the MacKenzie tartan as the official regimental tartan.

The Divisional Field Artillery consisted of three field artillery brigades, each of three six-gun 18-pdr. batteries. The Divisional Cavalry Squadron of 196 all ranks was drawn from the 19th Alberta Dragoons.

The usual allotment of supporting arms and services, such as engineers, service corps, medical units, and ordnance were organized into their appropriate units.



#### OTHER UNITS AND FORMATIONS

##### Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry

Though not part of 1st Div., the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry was raised at the same time as the First Contingent, and sailed with it to England. This unique regiment originated on 14 August when Captain A. Hamilton Gault, a Montreal businessman, offered \$100,000 towards the raising of a battalion of ex-soldiers of the British Army living in Canada. The proposal was accepted and the battalion, with every regular regiment of the British Army except one represented in its ranks, was rapidly recruited to full war establishment. Permission was granted to name the battalion after HRH Princess Patricia, daughter of the Governor General.

Although prepared to leave in three weeks, Admiralty convoy restrictions prevented the battalion from embarking until the departure of the First Contingent. On arriving in England the Patricia's, which was essentially a trained battalion, was assigned to the 80th Bde. of the 27th Div., a formation of British Regular units. The

battalion left for France on 21 December and entered the line on the night of 6/7 January 1915.

##### The Canadian Mounted Brigade

While the original proposal was for the formation of an infantry division, in late August orders were given to mobilize two batteries of horse artillery, and two cavalry regiments: the Royal Canadian Dragoons and Lord Strathcona's Horse.

The mounted troops accompanied the First Contingent to Salisbury Plain where, with 2nd King Edward's Horse, they formed the Canadian Mounted Bde. In February 1916 the 2nd KEH was replaced by the Fort Garry Horse, originally mobilized as the 6th Bn. of infantry, and the brigade became a totally Canadian formation<sup>(3)</sup>.

Ironically, the first action of the Mounted Bde. was dismounted when, on 4 May 1915, the horses were left behind and the troopers went into action on foot in support of 1st Canadian Div. in the Festubert battles. Although retitled the Canadian Cavalry

Bde. in June 1915, it was another year before the brigade was remounted and resumed its cavalry rôle.

##### 1st Canadian Automobile Machine Gun Brigade

As the First Contingent began mobilization, a group of 15 public-spirited citizens offered to raise and equip a machine gun unit mounted in armoured trucks. The offer was accepted enthusiastically by the minister, and a unit of nine officers and 114 other ranks was formed under the command of Maj. Raymond Brutinel, a retired French officer now living in Canada<sup>(4)</sup>.

The British Vickers machine gun was unobtainable because of the demands of the British Army. However, 20 Colt machine guns were purchased in the United States, which provided 16 guns for the unit establishment and four spares. The brigade was mounted in eight armoured trucks — each mounting two guns — six supply trucks, and four automobiles.

The Machine Gun Brigade assembled in Valcartier and sailed to England with the First Contingent. On their arrival in Salisbury, nobody was sure what to do with this strange unit, which did not fit any official War Office establishment. Viewed by Kitchener and other senior British officers as an interesting experimental unit with no particularly useful purpose, the truck-borne machine gunners were attached to a British cavalry formation assigned to a home defence rôle.

##### The Royal Canadian Regiment

Although it was not a part of the First Contingent, the rôle of Canada's only regular infantry battalion in the early months of the war is of interest. The War Office requested that a Canadian battalion replace the regular British battalion in garrison in Bermuda. The Royal Canadian Regt. was given this task, and, although kept from active operations for a year, it earned the distinction of being the first Canadian unit

to serve outside of Canada in the First World War.

Brought up to a strength of over 1,000 men, the battalion embarked for Bermuda on 6 September to replace the 2nd Lincolns. In August 1915 the RCR was replaced by the 38th Bn. and moved overseas to take its place in the newly-created 3rd Canadian Division.

## CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

### Uniforms

A Canadian drab service dress, approved in 1903, was issued to most militia units. However, mobilization stores of clothing were woefully inadequate for the thousands of volunteers still in civilian clothes. Clothing contracts were given at once, but the cloth had to be woven and dyed before uniforms could be manufactured.

The Canadian service dress differed considerably from its British counterpart. The jacket had a stand-up collar, seven buttons down the front, skirt pockets without buttons, and pointed drab cuffs. Based on the pattern of the red and blue serge frocks of the late 19th century, the Canadian jacket was close-fitting, while the British five-button jacket was loose-fitting to provide a comfortable working dress.

The shoulder straps of the original Canadian drab jacket were trimmed with braid, the colour and pattern denoting the arm or service. However, this complex system of braiding was replaced with detachable coloured shoulder straps in 1913. These were fastened to the jacket with tapes which passed through eyelets on the shoulder seam<sup>(5)</sup>. The colours denoting the arm of services were: cavalry — yellow; artillery — red; infantry — blue; rifles — green.

The new uniforms were made with fixed drab shoulder straps. However, many soldiers were issued with pre-war service dress and the blue shoulder strap soon became a status symbol for the infantry of the First Contingent.

The coloured shoulder

straps were phased out over the next year, most of them disappearing, along with their owners, in the bitter fighting in the Ypres Salient. But, in spite of regimental orders forbidding the practice, many original First Contingent soldiers continued to wear them on their walking-out jackets until they returned to Canada in 1919<sup>(6)</sup>.

### Badges

A great many militia units were represented in the First Contingent, and men arriving in uniform undoubtedly wore their original regimental badges. Battalions raised from a single militia regiment, such as the 8th Bn. (90th Winnipeg Rifles), and the 15th Bn. (48th Highlanders of Canada) of Toronto wore the regimental badges of their parent units, and, with some minor modifications, continued to do so for the duration of the war. Composite battalions formed from several major militia regiments, such as the 3rd Bn. of Toronto, and the 16th Bn. (Canadian Scottish), wore a mixture of regimental badges on mobilization.

Thousands of recruits had neither badges nor uniforms, and arrived in camp in civilian clothing. When finally

supplied with kit and clothing, these men were issued the basic Canadian badges, which consisted of the bronze maple leaf cap badge; the smaller maple leaf collar badges; and solid bronze CANADA shoulder titles. A second pattern of collar badge — the unique Canadian 'C-over-battalion-number' design — was approved before the Canadians left England, although many battalions did not receive these badges until after the Canadian Division arrived in France.

As the division gradually shook down, the battalions developed their own separate identities, and distinctive regimental badges were designed. These were manufactured by private suppliers, and paid for by the individual battalions; a practice which, with rare exceptions, continued until the autumn of 1917, when the government agreed to pay for the badges of units of the Canadian Corps<sup>(7)</sup>.

### Accoutrements

In 1896 the militia traded its worn out single-shot Sniders for magazine rifles, and replaced the Crimean-vintage crossbelt accoutrements with brown leather Oliver Pattern Valise Equipment. Active

service in South Africa exposed serious flaws in Dr. Oliver's system of straps and pouches, so Canadians were interested when the British Army adopted the 1908 Pattern Web Equipment (WE'08).

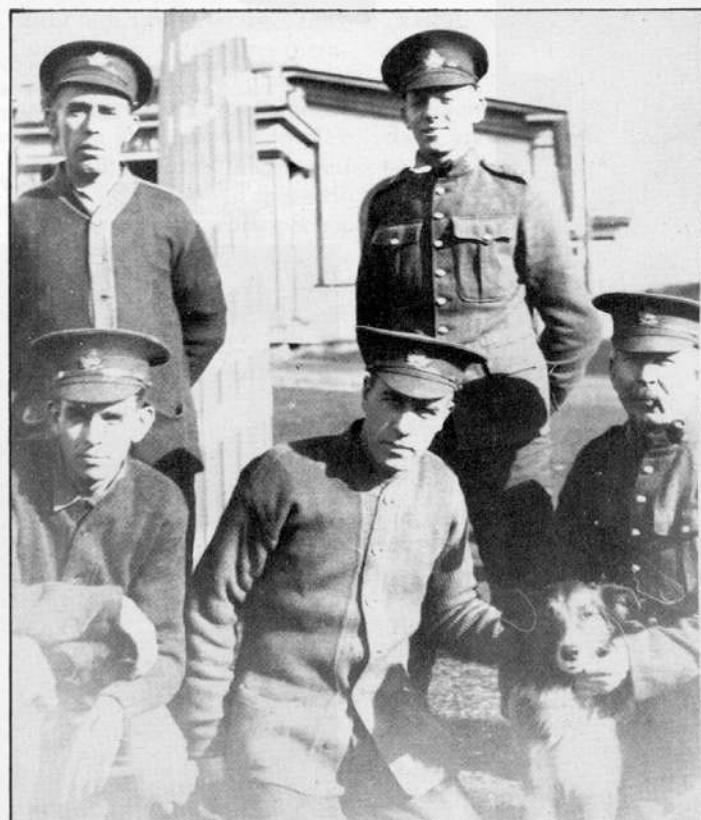
The Ross rifle, Mk.II, carried by the Canadian militia in 1908, was not charger-loaded, so the cartridge carriers of the WE'08 required modification for Canadian use. The original cartridge pockets were designed to hold ammunition in five-round chargers. The Canadian pattern carriers were made up of a lower tier of three pockets, each holding two ten-round packages of .303 ball, and an upper tier of a single large pocket holding one ten-round package of ball and five single rounds in loops.

In 1913 the Mills Equipment Co. introduced a new pattern of web equipment incorporating the back adjustment feature. The Canadians, now armed with the charger-loading Ross rifle Mk.III, ordered 5,000 sets of this new equipment to accommodate the five-round chargers of ammunition.

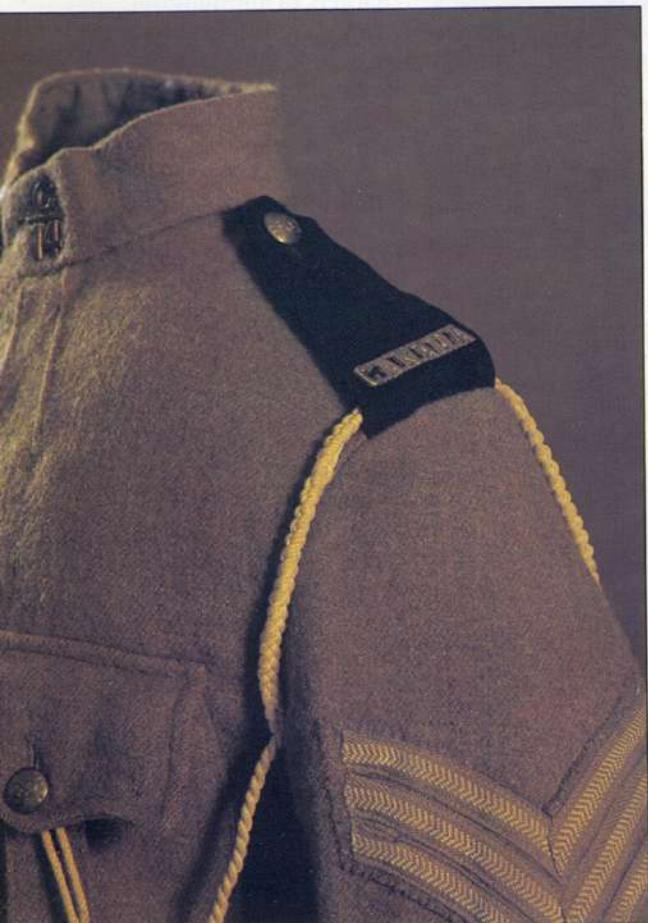
Thus, in 1914, three different sets of equipment were in service in the Canadian militia. These were: 1908 (Canadian) Pattern Web Equipment — 7,000 sets; 1913 Pattern Web Equipment — 5,000; Oliver Pattern Valise Equipment — 30,000.

On mobilization of the First Contingent, five battalions were equipped with the 1908 (Canadian) Pattern Web Equipment and the remaining infantry units were issued the obsolete Oliver Pattern Valise Equipment. The 1913 Pattern Web Equipment was issued to the dismounted units of the Permanent Force, including the Royal Canadian Regt., and also to the newly-raised Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry.

The unique characteristics of the leather Oliver equipment were a single 80-round



Soldiers in casual dress, October 1914. The Cardigan sweater was the universal off-duty attire in cool weather. (Summers Collection)



E

*Coloured shoulder straps on Canadian service dress: (C) The jacket of a staff sergeant of Engineers, with detachable shoulder straps. (D&E) Close-up views of the straps, showing the method of attachment — note blue tapes passing through eyelets in the shoulder.*

*(F) A drab service dress jacket of a sergeant of Infantry, with the blue straps sewn down to the shoulder seams. (Bill Kent, Ottawa; uniforms, Canadian War Museum Collection)*





Canadian artillerymen in drab serge jackets and whipcord breeches with dark blue seam welts. Their equipment consists of the obsolete 1889 pattern mounted infantry bandolier, Oliver haversack, and Mk.VI water bottle with carrier. The rolled greatcoat contains items of personal kit, while surplus gear is carried in the kit bag.

(2) The original mobilization plans for the CEF called for the recruiting and equipping of units at a local level under control of the Military District Commander, and the use of the existing facilities of Camp Petawawa as an assembly area if one was required. Hughes discarded these sensible plans and built Valcartier, which was never again used to assemble a division.

(3) When the Canadian Mounted Bde. was formed in December 1914, the 6th Bn. (Fort Garry Horse), originally a mounted unit, was taken from 2nd Inf. Bde. to form the Mounted Brigade Depot. The 10th Bn. (Calgary) replaced the 6th Bn. in 2nd Bde., and thus remained on the order of battle of 1st Canadian Division.

(4) Maj. Brutinel went on to a distinguished military career as an authority on the tactical employment of the medium machine gun. He was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General, decorated with the C.B., C.M.G. and D.S.O., and appointed Commander of the Canadian Machine Gun Corps.

(5) Regulations governing the coloured shoulder straps are set out in paras. 1142 and 1143, Canadian List of Changes, 15 August 1913.

(6) The uniform collection of the Canadian War Museum contains several drab service, dress jackets with blue shoulder straps, and service stripes indicating service from 1914 to 1919. Thus it appears some of the original First Contingent veterans wore the blue shoulder strap throughout their entire service.

(7) Several units changed the design of their regimental badge several times during the war, e.g. 1st and 2nd Battalions. Even reinforcement units recruited in Canada had their unique regimental badges. Because of the profusion of these badges, the collection of badges of the CEF, 1914-1919, has become a highly specialized area of militaria.

(8) Although much less satisfactory than web equipment, the Oliver system went through two major modifications. It was worn on active service for a brief period by infantry of the 4th Canadian Div., and remained in use by troops in training and on service in Canada throughout the war.

(9) One of the most complete and authoritative monographs on the Ross rifle is in the Volume of Appendices to Col. A.F. Duguid, *Canadian Forces in the Great War 1914-19*. A more recent review is Ronald Haycock's 'Early Canadian Weapons Acquisition: That Damned Ross Rifle', Canadian Defence Quarterly, 14:3 (Dec 1984).

ammunition pouch positioned in the pit of the stomach, and a wide yoke resting across the shoulder just below the neck, which supported the ammunition pouch on the front and the valise at the back. The supporting straps which crossed under the armpit cut into the wearer, while the yoke rode upwards, placing most of the strain high on the spine. Marching Canadians could be immediately identified by the distinctive convulsive heave of the shoulders to keep the yoke in position<sup>(8)</sup>.

The infantry of the First Contingent arrived in England wearing two different patterns of accoutrements. While this situation continued for most of the training period, the detested Oliver equipment was replaced with 1908 Pattern Web Equipment from British stores, to the delight of the troops, a few weeks before the division left for France.

## WEAPONS

The soldiers of the First Contingent were armed with the controversial Ross rifle

Mk.III. This .303 cal. weapon, intended to fire standard British service ammunition, had a straight-pull bolt action, and a charger-loaded five-shot magazine. It was longer and heavier than the British SMLE rifle and, although a superb target rifle, was mechanically temperamental, with a tendency to jam under service conditions.

The long and complex story of the Ross rifle is well beyond the scope of this article. There were strong people with strong views on both sides of the question and to Sam Hughes, the Minister of Militia, it became a highly emotional political issue. The problem was solved for the fighting soldiers in 1916 by the direct intervention of Gen. Douglas Haig, C-in-C, British Armies in the Field<sup>(9)</sup>.

The Canadian field batteries were equipped with the British QF 18-pdr. field gun. Because of the urgent requirements of the British forces, Canadian orders for 4.5in. field howitzers were not filled in time to equip the artillery of the First Contingent. The original field artillery brig-

ades of 1st Canadian Div. were short of the usual 4.5in. howitzer batteries which were a component of the British divisional artillery.

British machine guns were in short supply so a contract for 50 machine guns in .303cal., with spares and accessory equipment, was placed with the Colt Firearms Company. The first 20 of these air-cooled guns were received before the First Contingent sailed for England and the balance was delivered to the Canadians on Salisbury Plain. Although inferior to the sturdy Vickers, the Colts were available, and accompanied the Canadians to France where they performed yeoman service in the early battles of 1915. **[M]**

**To be continued:** Part 2 will cover the First Contingent's early service on the Western Front.

### Notes:

- (1) The most complete and scholarly study of the complex Minister of Militia and Defence is Ronald G. Haycock's *Sam Hughes: The Public Career of a Controversial Canadian*, Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1986.

# Johannes Steinhoff

GORDON WILLIAMSON  
Paintings by PETER DENNIS

The Luftwaffe's fighter arm in the Second World War produced many charismatic figures, several of whom went on to become the highest scoring aces in history. Names like Galland, Mölders, Hartmann and Marseille became world-famous; but of all Germany's great aces few earned such a level of respect as Johannes 'Macki' Steinhoff. After many years of service to his country, in both war and peace, he retired in 1972 as one of the most admired flyers in military history.

Johannes Steinhoff was born in Bottendorf, Saxony, on 15 September 1913. He completed his education by graduating from the University of Jena in 1934, and joined the Navy as an officer cadet. Within two years, however, a love of flying led him to transfer to the Luftwaffe. He trained as a fighter pilot and, by the outbreak of hostilities in 1939, had become Staffelkapitän of 10 Staffel, Jagdgeschwader 26 'Schlageter'.

Steinhoff spent the early part of the war with this Staffel<sup>(1)</sup>. Based in northern Germany, it was put on special duties as one of Germany's pioneering night fighter units. Equipped with the standard Messerschmitt Bf109E fighter, with no special radar or other apparatus, the first night fighter units grew mainly from the Germans' frustration at British bombing raids. These early raids were fairly ineffectual in terms of damage done, but

had great propaganda value as the Germans seemed powerless to prevent them. Frustrated Luftwaffe pilots had taken off, unauthorised, to pursue them, attempting visual interceptions by means

of natural moonlight only; although very few aircraft were shot down, it gave the British a shock, vastly improved German morale and, most importantly, proved the potential viability of night fighter operations.

No kills are recorded for Steinhoff in these operations, which saw 10/JG26 nominated as a Nachtjagdstaffel. The single-engined, single-seat Bf109 was quite unsuited for this rôle; the twin-engined two- (later three-) seat Bf110, unsuccessful in its intended rôle as a heavy day fighter or 'destroyer', became a highly successful night fighter.

In February 1940 Steinhoff transferred as Staffelkapitän to 4/JG52, still flying the Bf109E. He gained valuable combat experience against the Hurricanes and Spitfires of the RAF during the Battle of Britain, before his unit was posted in 1941 to the southern sector of the Eastern Front.

Peter Dennis's reconstructions opposite show (top) Hauptmann Johannes Steinhoff as Gruppenkommandeur, II Gruppe, Jagdgeschwader 52 on the southern sector of the Russian Front in summer 1942. He wears the blue-grey fabric blouse and flying trousers popular in the middle years of the war among fighter personnel in temperate climates. The simplified rank symbols worn on flying clothing (though not on the various patterns of private-purchase leather jackets) appear on both upper arms in white on blue: the bar indicates officer rank, the three 'eagles' captain's rank. Some pilots attached uniform shoulder straps of rank, and decorations, to the blouse, but the photograph on which this painting is based shows only the Luftwaffe officer's silver-embroidered national insignia on the right breast. The Ritterkreuz is worn on its ribbon at the throat of the issue blue-grey shirt; this most prized decoration was worn even when flying by most recipients. The blue-grey Luftwaffe 'Schiffchen' sidecap is piped silver for officer's rank, and bears the national insignia and cockade. The flying boots are standard issue pattern.

(Below) Generalleutnant Steinhoff as Inspekteur der Luftwaffe, 1966. He wears regulation general officer's service dress, general's rank being indicated by the gold cap distinctions and the collar patches and piping, and that of lieutenant-general by the three stars and oakleaves on the shoulder straps, which are piped gold and have a red underlay. The Luftwaffe cuff bands bear the same winged motifs as the aircrew general officer's right breast brevet; again, gold indicates a general. Lt Gen. Steinhoff also displays the USAF Senior Pilot's silver wings brevet on his left pocket flap.

The most interesting feature of this uniform is the display of ribbon bars bearing miniatures of various Second World War decorations. The top, 40mm ribbon bears the symbols of the Knight's Cross with Swords and Oakleaves. The other, 25mm ribbons are (second row, left to right) the Iron Cross 1st Class; Iron Cross 2nd Class; Fighter Pilot's Frontflugsänge in Gold, with pendant; Gold Wound Badge; (third row) 'Krim' Shield; 'Afrika' title; East Front Medal; Pilot's War Badge; (bottom) 12 Year Service Medal; and Italo-German African Campaign Medal. The miniatures of War and Wound Badges, Front Flying Clasp, and campaign shields and titles are worn on grey ribbons.

The 29-year-old Hauptmann Steinhoff in 1942, as commander of II/JG 52. Luftwaffe rank and command sequences differed from Allied practice: as a captain Steinhoff led a unit of nearly 30 fighters, a larger command than his British equivalent flight-lieutenant could ever hope for. He wears the Knight's Cross awarded after his hundredth air-to-air victory at the end of August that year. (Charita)



# Johannes Steinhoff



Hauptmann, II/JG52,  
Russia 1942



Generalleutnant, 1966

Generalmajor Steinhoff photographed in the service dress of the reborn Luftwaffe in the early 1960s, when he was German Military Representative to NATO. The results of his catastrophic Me262 crash are evident. Note the postwar ribbon bars bearing miniatures of his wartime decorations: these are detailed in the commentary to the colour plate.



## THE SOUTHERN STEPPES

Although the Russians later produced many fine aircraft and pilots, in 1941 their air force fell easy prey to the experienced Luftwaffe pilots, some of whom had already fought in the Spanish Civil War, the Polish Campaign and on the Western Front. By 30 August 1941 Oberleutnant Steinhoff had 35 victories to his name, and was decorated with the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross.

In February 1942 he became Kommandeur of II Gruppe, JG52, now flying the Bf109F, and saw extensive combat flying over the southern sector. He flew many support missions over the Crimea; his 100th kill came on 31 August; and on 2 September Hauptmann Steinhoff was named as the 115th recipient of the Oak-leaves to the Knight's Cross. In late 1942 he flew many missions around Stalingrad.

He left the Eastern Front in late March 1943, having reached his 150th kill on 2 February. Steinhoff was transferred to Sfax in the beleaguered Axis enclave in Tunisia as Kommodore of JG77, once again up against the higher-calibre opposition of the RAF, now joined by the USAAF. He was shot down by a Spitfire within a few days of his arrival, but was uninjured.

As the crumbling Axis forces in North Africa were pushed further and further back by Montgomery's and

Eisenhower's forces, JG77 was evacuated to Trapani in Sicily. They flew defensive sorties against Allied bombing raids; but by mid-July the Allied invasion of Sicily forced the Geschwader over the Straits of Messina to the air base at Vibo Valentia in Italy. On 28 July 1944 Oberstleutnant Steinhoff's 167th victory brought the award of the Swords as the 82nd recipient.

Later in the year he underwent conversion training on to the Me262 jet fighter at Lechfeld. Chosen by Generalleutnant Galland, once his Kommodore in JG26 and now Inspector of Fighters, Steinhoff joined JG7 at Brandenburg-Briest west of Berlin in December 1944, to command this, the world's first operational jet fighter wing.

## THE LAST MISSIONS

By the end of 1944 the Luftwaffe faced overwhelming Allied air superiority, while lack of fuel and experienced pilots drastically curtailed the ability to mount offensive operations. Hitler's fury at what he saw as the Luftwaffe's failure was deflected by Reichsmarschall Göring onto the fighter arm, which was enraged by Göring's unjustified attack. A protest group, including Steinhoff and fellow ace Gunther Lützow, gained an audience with Göring in Berlin, and told him of their feelings in no uncertain terms. Steinhoff

was immediately relieved of his command of JG7, leadership passing to Major Weissenberger.

By January 1945 Steinhoff had been forgiven, and joined the historic unit Jagdverband 44, the so-called 'Squadron of Aces'. The unit included one lieutenant-general, two colonels, a lieutenant-colonel and three majors — not among its staff complement, but among its combat pilots. These men were so highly decorated that it was jokingly suggested that a Knight's Cross was the minimum qualification for joining this élite band. Jagdverband 44 was Galland's opportunity to prove his contention that the Me262 could be a world-beating fighter, invaluable in the defence of the Reich against the Allied bombers. (Until that point Hitler had insisted that the jet be used largely as a fighter-bomber, the extra load negating the 262's advantage in speed and manoeuvrability.)

By the last days of the war JV44 could boast a full complement of these superb jets, although lack of fuel and experienced pilots meant that the unit could never achieve its full potential. Nevertheless, it made some devastating attacks on American bomber formations; the Me262s could approach, launch their 24-rocket salvos, and disappear before the escorting fighters could intervene. Although a few Allied piston-engined fighter pilots did score isolated air-to-air victories over 262s in 'encounter actions', generally speaking the only successful Allied tactic was to 'bounce' the jets as they landed or took off.

On 18 April 1945 Steinhoff and five other pilots were waiting to 'scramble' to intercept enemy bombers. Flying conditions were excellent. After the order was given to 'scramble' Steinhoff's jet stormed down the runway at 200kph. As he began to lift off the port wing suddenly dipped and, with a full load of fuel and 30mm ammunition, the jet crashed and burst into flames. Steinhoff was

engulfed by the inferno but, horribly burned, managed to stagger clear before the jet exploded.

He spent the next two years in hospital undergoing skin grafts in an attempt to repair his terrible disfigurements, leaving behind him a war in which he had flown around 900 combat missions, scoring 176 victories, which included 148 on the Eastern Front, six with the Me262 and four over four-engined bombers. His once-handsome features still disfigured, he was finally discharged in 1947, into a world that had no particular use for war heroes.

By 1952 Germany again needed experienced pilots to help re-form the new Luftwaffe as part of NATO, and Steinhoff once again donned uniform. Four years later Colonel Steinhoff was Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations. He was promoted brigadier-general in 1958, and major-general four years later. Appointed German military representative to NATO, he quickly won the respect of colleagues many of whom had been his war-time enemies. When his tour of duty in Washington was over he became Chief of Staff of NATO Air Forces, based in Paris. Even though he became Inspekteur der Luftwaffe in 1966, the 53-year-old Lt.Gen. Steinhoff insisted on maintaining his pilot qualification on all the new jets introduced into the Luftwaffe. He finally retired in 1972.

His long career saw him become not only a top ace, but a top jet fighter ace, whose gallantry in the cockpit and distinction in the conference room won the respect of friend and foe alike. Although he is perhaps less widely renowned than some of the other aces, like Galland or Mölders, Steinhoff's contribution to the history of the German Air Force is second to none. [M]

### Notes:

- (1) A Staffel usually fielded nine aircraft; three made up a Gruppe of about 27, and (usually) three Gruppen a Geschwader of about 80. Jagd- was the prefix identifying fighter units.

## Re-enactment:

# 23rd Regiment, Royal Welch Fusiliers in America (2)

JAY CALLAHAM

In 'MI' No.18 the author, an officer in one of America's premier re-enactment groups, described the participation of the 23rd Regiment in the American Revolutionary War, and illustrated the uniforms and accoutrements of the 'rank and file' members of the re-created 'Royal Welch Fusiliers in America'. This second article covers specialist soldiers, officers, surgeons and camp-followers.

### THE MUSICK

In the 18th century regimental commanders had wide discretion over the quality of uniforms and equipment issued to their regiments. They were given funds to purchase these items, and unused money became personal income. Although a certain amount of graft and corruption was evident in the system — as always — peer pressure and professional pride prompted many commanders to provide more than was required to meet the minimum standards set forth in the Royal Warrants.

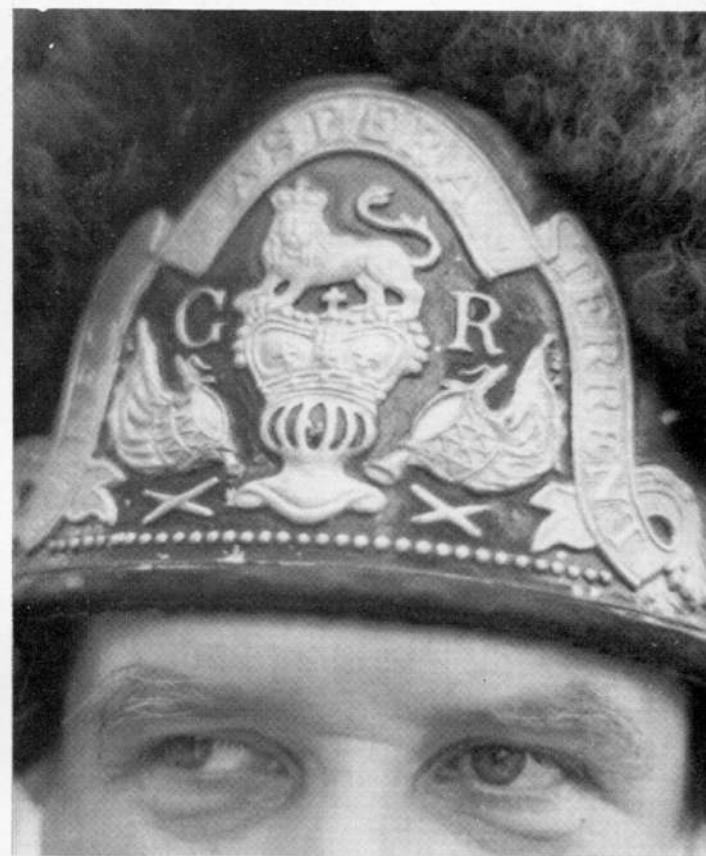
The most visible recipients of this largesse were the musicians. The field music (or 'Musick') of the time consisted of one drummer per company, two fifers in the Grenadier Company and sometimes a bugle-horn player in the Light Company. In August 1775 each company was authorised one additional drummer. The title 'drummer' also applied to fifers, and it is believed that fifers were added. The 23rd are also known to have had a band of music consisting of eight musicians, but no record of uniforms or instruments has been discovered<sup>(1)</sup>. One inspection return simply notes the band was 'very good'.

The musician of the re-created 23rd Regiment is a spectacular soldier indeed. He wears a bearskin cap of Grenadier height (12 in.); this is adorned with the Prince of Wales's badge on a red plush back, and has a pewter drum

device engraved with the numerals '23' attached to the hair portion in the rear. The front plate is similar to that worn by Grenadiers and Fusiliers except that in place of scrollwork on either side of the crown and helm it has trophies of colours, drums, and crossed drumsticks; it retains the scroll with the motto '*Nec Aspera Terrent*' ('not even hardships deter us'). All is in silver metal on a black japanned background.

His coat does not follow the usual custom of reversed colours, but is the same red hue as the soldiers' with the blue facings (collar, cuffs, lapels) of a Royal Regiment. Rather than the Regimental lace — red, blue and yellow on white worsted — the musician wears 'Royal lace' of yellow with a blue stripe, around each button, on the shoulder wings, on every exposed seam of the coat, and in seven chevrons (point up) on each sleeve. The exact colour and pattern of this lace is still the subject of some debate. A contemporary Guards musician's coat in the National Army Museum, London, has what is called 'Royal lace' in a much more elaborate pattern, but this may have been a special Guards lace: research continues.

The musician wears the same smallclothes of shirt, waistcoat and breeches as the ranker, together with straight-last buckled shoes, painted linen full gaiters with black leather garters, and a whitened buff waist carriage holding a model 1742 single-



guard hanger (infantry short sword) similar to that carried by sergeants. In addition to the linen haversack and tin canteen carried by all soldiers, he carries either a brass fife case or a drum.

The fife is a wooden instrument with six finger holes; metal ends may be made of brass, silver or other metals according to availability and cost. The fifer protects his fifes by carrying them in a

**Above:**  
*Detail of musician's cap plate showing trophies of drums, colours and crossed drumsticks flanking the King's Crest.*

**Centre:**  
*Pewter drum device on the back of a musician's cap.*

brass cylindrical case approximately 3in. in diameter and 17½in. deep. It has a hinged cover with hasp, and is suspended from the left shoulder to the right hip by a twisted crimson and blue

cord threaded through a 2½in. buff leather sling. The Regimental device of coronet, three feathers and scroll is engraved on the cylinder. It has a central divider inside.

The drum is a wooden side drum with rope tension adjusted by buff leather tabs. It is painted blue, with the Regimental badge over the number 'XXIII'; the hoops are red. In addition to a plaited 'drag rope' it has two straps of one-inch buff leather hanging underneath which allow it to be slung on the back for long marches. The sling is of 3in. wide white buff leather with one loop on either side to accommodate the sticks. A brass ring at the bottom attaches to a brass hook on the drum when in playing position. Many drummers also add a cloth or leather apron or pad to reduce abrasion of breeches and leg. The drum is also issued with a canvas cover for protection while on the march or in storage.

On parade the drums and fifes served the useful purpose of maintaining the marching cadence and providing inspiring music. In battle they were of some use to keep the troops in step, but the cacophony of musketry, cannoneade, and shouting of orders rendered them virtually useless for transmitting signals. For this reason musicians were often detailed as surgeon's assistants and litter-bearers during battles.

Among their less desirable duties were being the first troops up in the morning to beat reveille, and the last to retire at night after lights out. It was the drummers who advanced between fighting lines to beat the parley, and sometimes to actually carry messages to the enemy lines.

One of the most obnoxious duties of the drummer was that of administering floggings in execution of corporal punishment. One unconvincing explanation was that a victim would be less likely to exact revenge on a drummer. Another theory was that the drummers, usually younger than line soldiers, had the strength to inflict pain with-



**Left:**

Drummers of the 23rd; contrary to the usual Line practice, the 'musketeer' of Royal Regiments did not wear coats in reversed colours. The exact design of the yellow and blue 'Royal' lace is still the subject of research and debate.

**Below:**

Two officers discussing the day's events outside the Royal Governor's residence in Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia. The officer on the left wears the unlaced cocked hat off duty.





Front and rear views of the senior Pioneer, distinguished by a corporal's white shoulder knot. In addition to the normal haversack and canteen, pouch and bayonet belts, and musket, he has a leather apron, an axe and a saw — note black leather carriage for the tools slung behind him. In the 18th century a common soldier is most unlikely to have been able to afford spectacles; but in the re-created RWFIA some concessions must be made to modern needs, although frames must be of authentic 18th century shape.

**Above right:**

Regimental surgeon, in unlaced officer's coat and tricorn, uses his field kit to treat a Grenadier's hand injury.



out causing crippling injuries. With sentences of up to 1,000 lashes being awarded (executed over a period of several days) for even trivial infractions, one can probably dismiss any theories based on considerations of mercy. An interesting aside is that camp women were also flogged for their petty crimes, though generally they seem to have received lighter sentences than the men for similar offences. Lord Howe's orderly book refers to a soldier and a camp woman who were convicted of robbing a local merchant: he received 1,000 lashes, she 100.

Punishment of this nature was inflicted with the 'cat-o-nine-tails', a turned wooden grip with nine long, knotted leather thongs. The cat is carried in a red cloth pouch suspended by a twisted red and blue cord from the left shoulder to the right hip. To witness the execution of the court's order the Regiment

*Drummer of the 23rd, in laced coat, wielding the cat-o'-nine-tails during the execution of corporal punishment. (All photographs courtesy of the author)*

**Below:**

*Drum, with red top and bottom hoops; dark blue body with Prince of Wales's badge in white (plumes, and pearls on coronet), gold (coronet, and spines of plumes), red and green (alternate jewels on coronet), and black shading; red scroll with gold edges and lettering; and gold 'XXIII'. The tabs are whitened buff, the cords whitened hemp.*

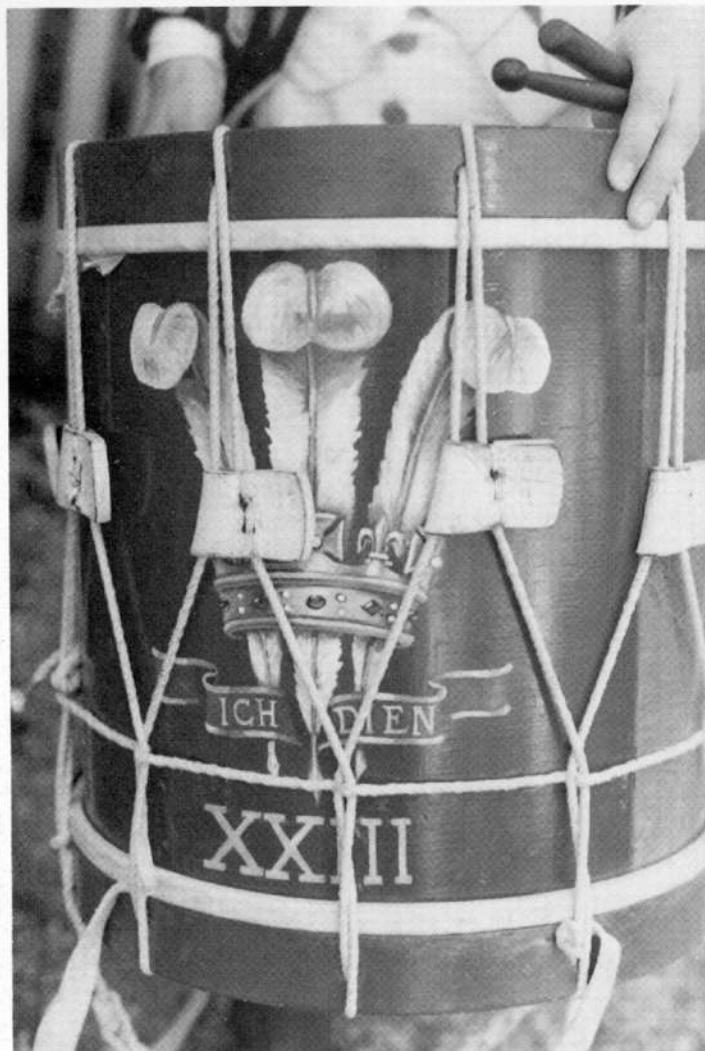
would form a three-sided square with the defaulter and punishment detail in the open end. The victim would be stripped to the waist, tied to a stake, and then lashed according to the court's order (for punishment), shot or hanged (for spies). Normally a single drummer would lay on no more than 25 lashes at a time. The surgeon would be on hand to stop the process if it became life-threatening to the hapless rogue, and after a suitable period of convalescence the punishment would continue until fully executed.

The most famous execution witnessed by the 23rd Regiment during the American Revolution was the hanging of the spy Nathan Hale on 22 September 1776. He is remembered for the famous last words '... I only regret that I have but one life to give for my country.'

### THE PIONEERS

Another valuable asset to the Regiment is the Pioneer. This soldier has additional duties of clearing undergrowth along a line of march, cutting trees for firewood and *abattis*, and constructing palisades and other obstacles around camps and forts as well as cutting through those of the enemy.

His basic uniform and kit is the same as that of a private soldier. He wears a bearskin cap of Fusilier height (10in.), a red coat with blue facings and Regimental lace and buttons, white linen smallclothes, black full gaiters with horn buttons and white linen leg wraps, and black buckled shoes; and carries a musket, cartridge box with plate, linen haversack, and



whitened buff leather waist carriage for his bayonet. The Pioneer has a very distinctive cap plate: rather than the black background found on all other bearskin caps in the Regiment, his is red. The scrollwork beside the central helm and crown device is replaced with white metal saws and axes. A circular pewter ornament stamped with the numerals '23' is stitched to the hair portion of the rear of the cap.

He also wears a large russet leather apron to protect his uniform, and carries an axe and saw in a plain leather carriage slung on his back. The apron is normally worn under the coat, which is removed for heavy work.

The chief Pioneer is a corporal and wears the white cord of his rank on the right shoulder. Another distinction is the wearing of two epaulette straps rather than the one on the left shoulder worn by the other rankers.

### THE OFFICERS

In the 18th century officers procured their commissions and advanced in rank by way of a purchase system. The official rates in marching regiments of foot listed in Simes, *Military Guide* (1776), I, 347-349, were:  
Lieutenant-Colonel £3,500  
Major £2,600  
Captain £1,500  
Captain-Lieutenant £800  
Lieutenant £550  
2nd Lieutenant or Ensign £400

This, of course, was the official rate set by Parliament; actual prices for commissions varied widely among Regiments based on seniority, geographic assignment, reputation and other factors. The officers received virtually no formal training. While it is not within the scope of this article to comment on the merits of such a system, one must recognise the magnificent record of success actually achieved by the army during the long period when this system obtained.

The officer of the re-created 23rd Regiment is a grand sight in his bearskin cap with gilded plate, scarlet coat with

gold lace, epaulettes and buttons, sword, gorget and sash.

The bearskin caps of Fusilier and Grenadier officers are the same height as those of the men (10in. and 12in. respectively). The front plate is stamped with the King's crest as on the Grenadier and Fusilier caps, but is gold-plated and then black japanned. The coronet and feathers devices on the red plush back-piece are of gold and silver bullion. The Grenadier officer has a gold-plated flaming bomb device with the numeral '23' engraved thereon sewn to the hair portion of the rear of the cap. Off duty a gold-laced military cocked hat or simple black civilian style tricorn hat may be worn.

The wig is in the 'grenadier bob' style of a three-plait braid turned up in the rear. Two side curls, one on each side even with the middle of the ear, are worn by officers but not enlisted ranks. White wigs in the same style are ordered for formal occasions. A note on the hairstyle is that evidence indicates this style was worn throughout the late 18th and early 19th century. An inspection return dated 20 May 1786 notes 'officers appeared in hats — hair turned up behind.' A portrait of an officer of the Regiment by J.A. Atkinson dated 1814 shows the same hairstyle being worn even after queues were abolished in 1808.

The officer wears small-clothes consisting of white wool knee breeches and waistcoat, together with a white linen shirt made with ruffles at the sleeves and around the front chest opening (the chest ruffle is actually sewn to the shirt and is not a separate 'jabot', as is often shown). Mother-of-pearl buttons secure the collar and cuffs of the shirt. Small gilded regimental buttons fasten the waistcoat (usually with the top three unbuttoned to show off the ruffles). There is some controversy over the design of the waistcoat, since the vague terms of the Royal Warrants call for it to be 'plain'. Does 'plain' mean without pockets and/or flaps,

or simply without lace? The officers of the re-created Regiment have settled upon an unlaced waistcoat with pockets and flaps. The breeches are of the front fall pattern with full seats to allow comfortable sitting. The fall is secured by gilt regimental buttons, three large ones down the front and small ones at the corners, for the pocket flaps, and at the knees. Gold-plated buckles fasten the knee straps.

A black velvet neck stock is worn in the field, a white linen stock or cravat for formal occasions. The stock is held with a buckle at the rear. A crimson sash with ball tassels is wound about the waist under the coat and tied at the left hip. White stockings held up by black leather garter straps cover the officer's legs. Black straight-last shoes with gilt buckles are worn on most occasions; when mounted officers wear black boots with brown tops. Boots may also be worn at the commander's discretion and when off duty.

The brilliant scarlet coat is the symbol of King George III's officers in the American Colonies. The Fusilier officer wears a frock-type coat of scarlet melton wool lined with white wool and with the blue facings of a Royal Regiment. The cape or collar is of the fold-down type, coming to a point in the rear; this style was worn throughout the Revolution. In Hew Strachan's book *British Military Uniforms 1768-96*, pp.216-217, two pieces of correspondence dated November and December 1784 quote: 'The Board of General Officers . . . observed in the pattern coat of the 23rd Regiment of Foot that the Collar was made upright . . . and have therefore suspended the making up of that clothing until His Majesty's pleasure shall be signified . . .'; and ' . . . His Majesty does not approve of the upright collar of the pattern coat shewn for the 23rd Regiment or Royal Welch Fuzileers, and is pleased to order that it be made to fall down in the same form and manner as those of



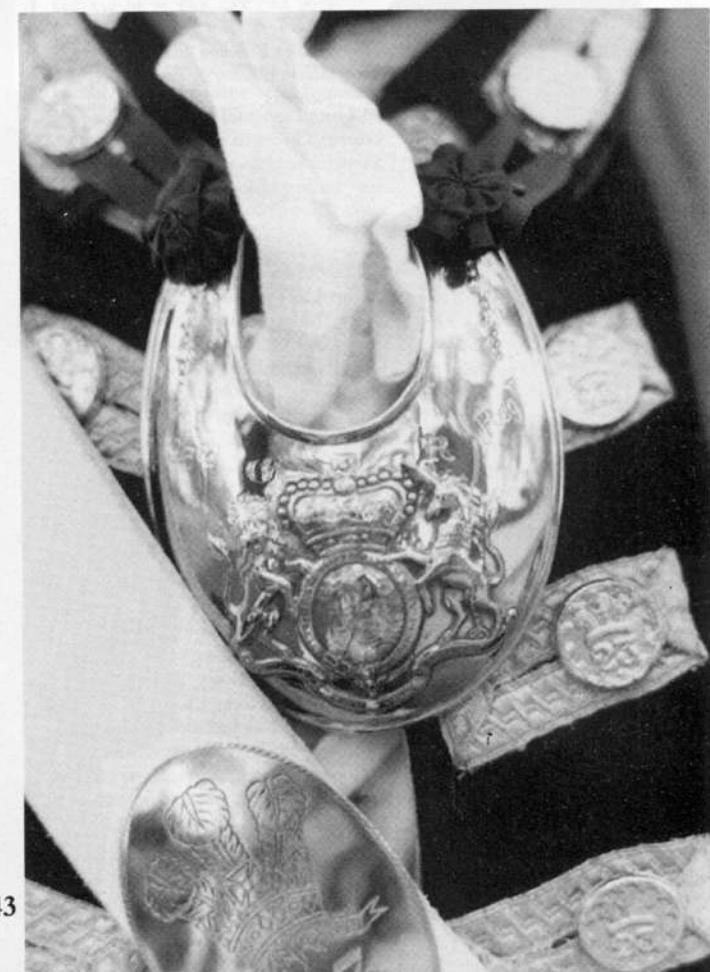
Pioneer's cap plate, the ground painted red, with raised silver scroll and motifs, including axes and saws.

**Below:**  
Officer's gorget, with dark blue satin rosettes; sword belt plate; buttons, and lace. All 'metal' is in gold.

the other Regiments of Foot are . . .'. The coat has gilt Regimental buttons which bear the Prince of Wales's coronet and three feathers over an arabic '23' with scrollwork around the edge. Gold lace is sewn in a rectangular pattern around the buttonholes and in four patches in the back. Two hooks and eyes fasten the coat in front; it may also have the lapels buttoned across for warmth. White gloves are worn at all times out of doors, of cloth or leather depending upon the circumstances.

Evidence indicates that Fusilier officers of both company and field grade wore

two epaulettes in the fashion prescribed for Grenadiers, instead of the single epaulettes on the right shoulder prescribed for company officers of most foot regiments. The only known example of epaulettes of the period is a portrait of an officer of the 23rd Regiment which hangs in the Regimental Museum in Caernarfon



Castle. The epaulettes shown are of wide gold lace with gold fringe and crescent. The Regimental device of coronet and three ostrich plumes is either directly embroidered in silver and gold bullion or is appliquéd with a piece of blue wool. This pattern also conforms to those illustrated in the painting '*The Death of Major Pierson at St. Helier, Jersey, 1781*' by John S. Copley. Both the appliquéd and direct embroidered style are allowed in the re-created Regiment. Coat turnbacks are fastened with hooks and eyes and are reinforced with gold metal hearts bearing the number '23'. Grenadier officers have gold metal bomb devices.

Gold-hilted swords bearing gold and scarlet sword knots are worn suspended from the right shoulder on a 2½in. whitened buff belt. A gilt oval crossbelt plate bears the ever-present coronet and three feathers over the numeral '23'. On duty the sword belt is worn over the coat, off duty underneath. An additional emblem of an officer on duty is the gorget.



This is a crescent of gold-plated brass stamped with the King's crest and engraved with 'XXIII Reg't' or '23rd Reg't'. It is suspended around the neck by a satin ribbon or worn hanging from the top lapel buttons of the coat; the ribbon is attached to two satin rosettes of facing blue.

Company officers also wear cartridge boxes of black saddle leather with the Regimental device in gold-plated brass on the flap. The box is suspended at the right hip by a 2½in. wide whitened buff strap over the left shoulder (the reason for the second epaulette). They are armed with fusils (pronounced 'fuzee'), which are shorter and lighter versions of the soldiers' musket. Bayonet scabbards are worn in a double frog with the sword when under arms.

In the field and on parade officers wear black full gaiters with white linen leg wraps like the men. They may carry haversacks and canteens but are not required to do so.

Blue cloaks and greatcoats are authorised for inclement weather when not in formation.

Light Infantry Company officers wear black leather Light Infantry caps with visors, black cross belts and shortened coats. Instead of epaulettes they have gold-laced wings at the shoulder. Half gaiters are customary for the 'Light Bobs'.

### THE SURGEON

An officer of dubious value (given the standard of medical expertise at that date) was the surgeon or 'chirurgeon'. Surgeons were commissioned officers on the Regimental Staff but were generally at the bottom of the social scale. They were positively not a part of the chain of command.

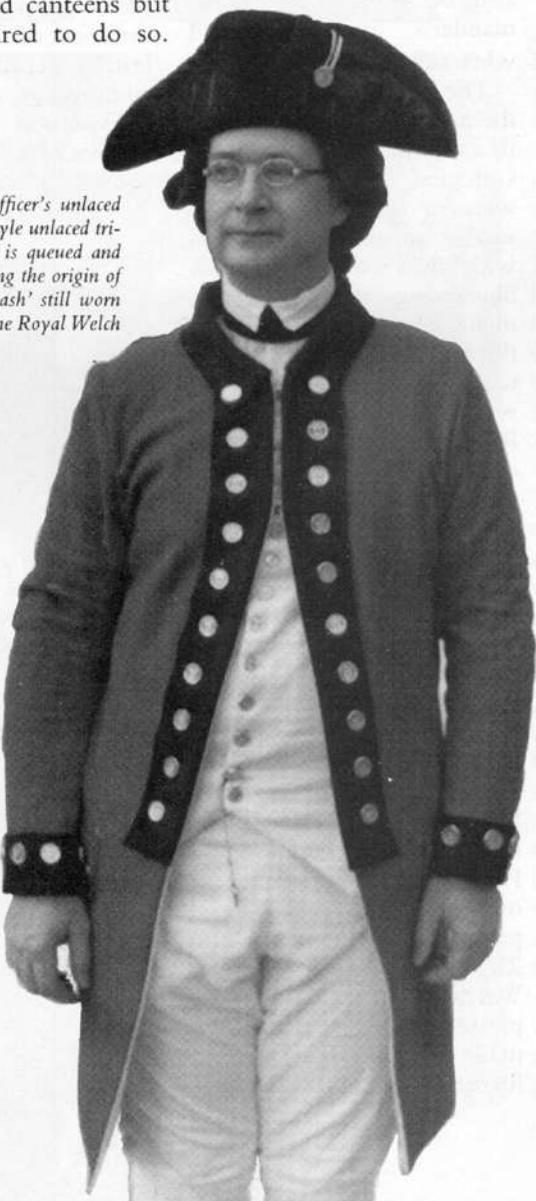
The surgeon is dressed very much like an officer of the Regiment with the following exceptions. He wears his hair hanging down in a

queue or bag (which later became the 'flash'). He wears a cocked hat on all occasions, either gold-laced or plain. His coat is of officer's cut with gilt buttons but no lace. He wears no sword, sash, gorget, nor epaulettes, these being reserved for Line officers. Smallclothes are the same as for other officers. In addition to the large medicine and surgical instrument cases in the field hospital, the surgeon of the re-created Regiment may carry a wooden or leather box of small tools and bandages to perform a primitive form of triage on wounded men in the field. (This is probably inaccurate historically, but provides a good opportunity to demonstrate the less romantic side of 18th century soldiering to spectators at public events.)

### Women

Another very important contribution to camp life was provided by the camp women. From the drab wenches who followed the rankers to the elegant officer's ladies, virtually any fashion of the period could be found at any given time. The only variations from the normal fashions of a woman's class or station would be frequent wearing of cast-off soldiers' clothing by the soldiers' women.

The British army allowed up to seven women to be carried on the establishment of each company. They received half a soldier's pay and rations and in return did much of the cooking, sewing, and other domestic jobs. They were also infamous for



*A surgeon in an officer's unlaced coat, and civilian-style unlaced tricorn hat. His hair is queued and bagged, the bag being the origin of the black ribbon 'flash' still worn under the collar by the Royal Welch Fusiliers.*

### Opposite:

*Surgeon's tools from the 'capital case', one of which was issued to each surgeon. Top to bottom, left to right: screw; tourniquet; cranial saw; bone nipper, and retractors; forceps, with musket ball; needle threaded with flax thread (the same as used to sew shoes . . .); probe.*

### Opposite bottom:

*More tools in the capital case, including (from top, left to right) trocar used to drain abscesses, a half-open and two folded thumb lancets; forceps; various tweezers and forceps; a Z-shaped 'director' used to help control the scalpel, and — below forceps — a tenaculum, used to grasp end of vein or artery for suturing; scalpels; and the bone saw.*

their expertise in 'foraging'. That many more than the authorised seven followed the companies is evident from many general orders being issued to run them out. Stealing, selling 'poor quality' liquor to troops, and many other infractions are cited.

The re-created Regiment does not allow women to perform as soldiers or to have any official status. They are welcome to accurately portray women of the period, and add a great deal to the historical interpretation.

### The Goat

An important member of the re-created Regiment is the Regimental Goat (never referred to as a 'mascot'). The first official mention of this animal is to be found in Major Donkins' *Military Recollections*, 1777: 'The Royal Regiment of Welch (sic) Fusiliers has a privalegeous honour of passing in review preceded by a goat

with gilded horns, and adorned with ringlets of flowers: and although this may not come immediately under the denomination of a reward for Merit, yet the corps values itself much on the ancientness of the custom . . .'. The goat figures in a number of histories, and an anecdote recording a mishap during the St. David's Day ceremonies of 1 March 1775 in Boston confirms that the Regiment had a goat in America<sup>(2)</sup>. **MI**

### Notes

(1) Typical instruments of an eight-piece band of the period were two 'hautboys' (oboes), two 'clarionets', two French horns, and two bassoons. Regimental records indicate that the musicians were regular soldiers. While special uniforms may have been provided and stored, none have been recorded for the band.

(2) Cary & McCance, *Regimental Records of the Royal Welch Fusiliers*, 1921

**To be continued:** Part 3 will detail the organisation and activities of the re-created regiment.

## REVIEWS

'Great Battles of the American Civil War' by John Macdonald; Michael Joseph; 200pp, illus. throughout in col. & b/w; appendices, index; £19.95; and 'Great Battles of World War I' by Anthony Livesey; identical format and details.

These two books continue the series which began with *Great Battlefields of the World*. They are attractively produced, and illustrated on every page with period photographs, paintings, new figure artwork, diagrams, etc. As straightforward, middle-of-the-road studies of their subjects for non-specialist readers they are good value; and would make, for instance, attractive gifts for an intelligent younger reader just beginning to dig deeper into the subject. We do have one serious reservation about them, however, which we feel it is fair to point out, since this aspect is put forward by the publishers as a major selling point.

Each major battle covered is made the subject of a spread of colour artwork giving a 'bird's eye view' of troops in movement over the terrain; and these are claimed to offer, by means of three-dimensional computer mapping incorporated in the artwork preparation, a clear understanding of the importance of the 'third dimension' of terrain. Unfortunately, we simply do not find this to be so. In our view, the inherently contradictory demands of scale and colour appeal have not been reconciled. The paintings do not seem to us to be at all clear, or to offer any information that could not be put across with more force in other ways. The two-colour 'computer maps' of terrain features reproduced much smaller on the supporting pages are, by contrast, extremely useful and a genuine step forward. We believe the publishers would be wise to make much more of a feature of these, and to keep colour artwork for the jobs which only colour can do. **MP**

to report the first of a series of books which will go some way to redressing the balance. The author of this study of the Militia and Volunteers in Anglesey and Caernarfon from 1539 to 1908 is acknowledged as the leading authority on the subject, and Curator of the Welsh Regiment Museum at Cardiff Castle from 1978. As might be expected from such a source (and for a title short-listed for a Welsh Arts Council Award) the book is a treasury of fact, nominal muster-rolls of both 'general' and genealogical interest, reproduction of contemporary illustrations ranging from uniform studies to badges, medals, Colours, portraits and surviving garments. The illustrations alone make it an invaluable reference to badge-collectors; but it is more than just a local history, as there is much of more general relevance to a wider study of the British Army.

Who, for example, carried the brass blunderbuss listed in the stores of the Caernarfon Militia in 1773, and what were their four 'Iron Scrapers'? The level of research involved is demonstrated by the account of a hitherto-unrecorded corps, the Loyal Paris Mountain Volunteers of 1797; and similar fascinating facts are found throughout. The illustrations are excellent, and include such unusual features as a cyclist of the 3rd Bn. Royal Welsh Fusiliers c.1898, in plus-four style legwear and with integral cartridge-tubes on his tunic-breast.

The next volumes in the series will cover Glamorganshire, a companion to the same author's earlier history of the county yeomanry; and it is to be hoped that ultimately the series will cover all the Welsh counties, to stand as a permanent record of this most significant subject. Highly recommended. **PJH**

### We have also received:

'A World Atlas of Military History 1945-1984' by T. Hartman (Da Capo Press, £10.95)

'Soviet Mechanized Firepower Today' by S.J. Zaloga (Arms and Armour Press, £4.95)

'The Chieftain Tank' by S. Dunstan (Arms and Armour Press, £4.95)

'World War One: 1914' by P.J. Haythornwaite (Arms and Armour Press, £4.95)

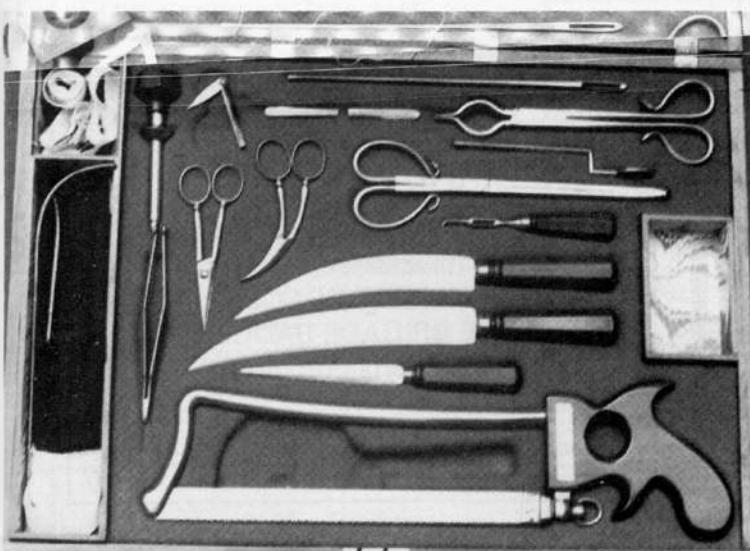
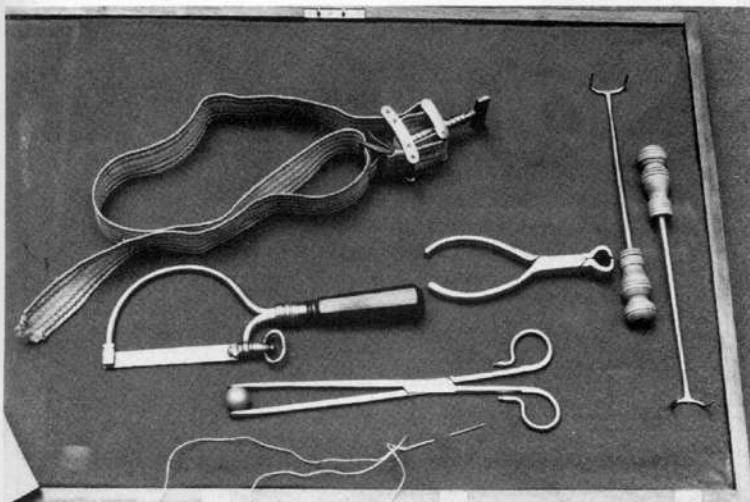
'Military Modelling Guide to Military Dioramas' by G. Dixey (Argus Books, £5.95)

'Military Modelling Guide to Military Vehicles' by Robin Buckland (Argus Books, £5.95)

'Wargaming World War Two' by S. Asquith (Argus Books, £12.95)

'Buildings for the Military Modeller; Design and Construction' by I. Weekley (Batsford, £12.95)

It is especially pleasing, therefore,



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BY KEITH A. ROCCO



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